PreK - 12 Education Committee

Meeting
Tuesday, February 7, 2006
1:15 — 2:45 p.m.
Morris Hall

Second Revised

Allan G. Bense
Speaker

Ralph Arza
Committee Chairman

CHAMBER ACTION

The Elder & Long-Term Care Committee recommends the following:

Council/Committee Substitute

Remove the entire bill and insert:

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to immunizations; amending s. 1003.22, F.S.; requiring each district school board and the governing authority of each private school to provide information to parents concerning meningococcal disease and the vaccine therefor; requiring the Department of Health to adopt rules specifying the age or grade level of students for whom such information will be provided; requiring each district school board and the governing authority of each private school to determine the means and method for the provision of information to parents concerning meningococcal disease; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (c) is added to subsection (10) of section 1003.22, Florida Statutes, to read:

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

1003.22 School-entry health examinations; immunization against communicable diseases; exemptions; duties of Department of Health.--

(10) Each district school board and the governing authority of each private school shall:

(c) Provide detailed information concerning the causes, symptoms, and transmission of meningococcal disease; the risks associated with meningococcal disease; and the availability, effectiveness, and known contraindications of any required or recommended vaccine against meningococcal disease to every student's parent, in accordance with the recommended ages of students determined by the Department of Health to be appropriate for the administration of such vaccine. The Department of Health shall adopt rules that specify the age or grade level of students for whom such information shall be provided, consistent with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention concerning the appropriate age for the administration of the vaccine, and shall make available information concerning the causes, symptoms, and transmission of meningococcal disease; the risks associated with meningococcal disease; and the availability, effectiveness, and known contraindications of any required or recommended vaccine against meningococcal disease to school districts and the governing authorities of each private school. Each district school board and the governing authority of each private school shall determine the means and methods for the provision of such information to students' parents.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

CODING: Words stricken are deletions; words underlined are additions.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 127 CS Immunizations
SPONSOR(S): Hays
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1160

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) Elder & Long-Term Care Committee	7 Y, 0 N, w/CS	DePalma	Walsh
2) PreK-12 Committee		Beagle	Mizereck
3) Health Care Appropriations Committee			
4) Health & Families Council			
5)			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Committee Substitute for HB 127 requires district school boards and private school governing authorities to provide every student's parent specified information about meningococcal disease in accordance with the recommendations of the Department of Health (DOH). The CS requires DOH to adopt rules specifying the age or grade level of students to receive the information consistent with recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). It further requires DOH to make information about the disease available to district school boards and private school governing authorities, who shall determine the means and methods for providing this information to students' parent.

See Fiscal Comments.

The effective date is July 1, 2006.

This document does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill sponsor or House of Representatives.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

Provide limited government –

- The CS requires DOH to adopt rules specifying the age or grade level of students to receive information about meningococcal disease consistent with recommendations of the CDC. It requires DOH to make information about the disease available to district school boards and private school governing authorities, who shall determine the means and methods for providing this information to students' parents.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Meningococcal Disease and Immunization

The *meningococcus* bacterium can cause a life-threatening infection of the bloodstream, meningitis (infection of the brain and spinal cord coverings), or both. Sometimes referred to as spinal meningitis, bacterial meningitis can be quite severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss, or learning disability. Death occurs in 10 to 14 percent of the 1,400-2,800 cases of meningococcal meningitis that are reported in the U.S. each year.[1]

The largest incidence of the disease is in children under age 5, with a second peak in children and young adults between the ages of 15 and 24.[2]

Before the 1990s, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) was the leading cause of bacterial meningitis, but new vaccines being given to all children as part of their routine immunizations have reduced the occurrence of invasive disease due to *H. influenzae*.[3]

There are five subtypes (or Serogroups) of the bacterium that cause meningococcal meningitis (Serogroups A, B, C, Y, and W-135). Two vaccines are available to immunize against Serogroups A, C, Y and W-135: Menomune, licensed in 1981, and Menactra (manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur, and also known as MCV-4), licensed on January 14, 2005 for use in people 11-55 years of age.[4]

On May 26, 2005 the CDC recommended routine administration of the Menactra vaccine for all children 11-12 years old, previously unvaccinated adolescents at high school entry, and college freshmen living in dormitories

> to help achieve vaccination among those at highest risk for meningococcal disease. As the vaccine supply increases, CDC hopes, within three years, to recommend routine vaccination for all adolescents beginning at 11 years of age.[5]

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[1] Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report; *Prevention and Control of Meningococcal Disease: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices*, May 27, 2005, Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, available at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5407a1.htm.

[2] *Vaccine Information Meningococcal Disease*, updated March 11, 2005, National Network for Immunization Information, available at http://www.immunizationinfo.org/vaccineInfo/vaccine_detail.cfv?id=15.

[3] *Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Disease, Disease Information, Meningococcal Disease*, Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, available at http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/meningococcal_g.htm.

[4] There is no licensed vaccine for Serogroup B in the U.S. *Vaccine Information Meningococcal Disease.*

[5] Press Release: *CDC Recommends Meningococcal Vaccine for Adolescents and College Freshman*, May 26, 2005, Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, available at http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r050526b.htm.

In September 2005, CDC and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an alert[6] after reports made to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) indicated that five adolescents had developed Guillain-Barre Syndrome[7] (GBS) following administration of the Menactra vaccine. By November 2005, six Menactra recipients (all ages 17 or 18) experienced an onset of GBS 14-31 days after vaccination.[8] Although the timing of the onset of neurological symptoms (within the first month of vaccination) was alarming, it was not immediately known if there was a sound causal relationship between Menactra vaccination and GBS, as the six reported cases of GBS among approximately 2.5 million doses of Menactra distributed nationally is a rate similar to what might have been expected to occur by chance alone.[9]

The CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) both continue to recommend Menactra administration for all 11 and 12 year olds at the pre-adolescent visit.[10]

Florida's public school vaccination schedule

In Florida, the following immunizations are required by age and school grade:[11]

Immunizations Required for Preschool Entry (age-appropriate doses as are medically indicated):

- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis Series
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
- Hepatitis B
- Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)
- Polio Series
- Varicella

Immunizations Required for Kindergarten Entry:

- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis Series
- Hepatitis B Series
- Measles-Mumps-Rubella (two doses of Measles vaccine, preferably as MMR)
- Polio Series
- Varicella

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[6] *FDA and CDC Issue Alert on Menactra Meningococcal Vaccine and Guillain Barre Syndrome*, September 30, 2005, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, available at http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2005/NEW01238.html.

[7] According to the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, GBS is a severe neurological disorder causing weakness of the body's extremities as a result of an inflammatory demyelination of peripheral nerves. This weakness can intensify rapidly, rendering certain muscles useless and, when severe, leave a patient almost totally paralyzed. Although anyone can be affected by GBS – the disease can occur at any age and both sexes are equally susceptible to onset – the incidence rate is only about one person in 100,000. Presently, there are no known cures for GBS, although several therapies (including plasma exchange and high-dose immunoglobulin therapy) are utilized to accelerate recovery. Recovery periods for patients experiencing GBS are varied and can range from a few weeks to a few years, although roughly 30 percent of patients experience residual weakness after 3 years. A small proportion of patients die, and 20 percent of hospitalized patients can have prolonged disability.

[8] *Guillain-Barre Syndrome Among Adolescents Who Received Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine Factsheet*, November 9, 2005, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, available at http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2005/NEW01238.html.

[9] Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, *Guillain-Barre Syndrome Among Recipients of Menactra Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine – United States, June-July 2005*, October 6, 2005, Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, available at http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm54d1006a1.htm. Although the number of doses distributed is known, the precise number of administered doses is not.

[10] Ibid.

[11] *Vaccine Information Florida Vaccine Requirements*, National Network for Immunization Information, available at http://www.immunizationinfo.org/vaccineInfo/disease_stateinfo.cfv; *Immunization and Record Requirements*, available at http://www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/immune/school.pdf

Immunizations Required for 7th Grade Entry:

Hepatitis B Series
Second Dose of Measles Vaccine (preferably MMR vaccine)
Tetanus-Diphtheria Booster

Note: Since the Hepatitis B Series and Second Dose of Measles Vaccine were added to the kindergarten immunization schedule, students are not required to receive these vaccinations for 7th grade entry unless they were not obtained previously.

Immunizations required for college/university students:

MR, M2 (All freshman and new enrollees in public universities)
Meningococcal (All college/university students who live in dorms, or must sign waiver)

Immunizations Required for Child Care and/or Family Day Care (up-to-date for age):

Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis
Haemophilus influenzae type b
Measles-Mumps-Rubella
Polio
Varicella

While school districts and private schools are not currently required to provide information to parents regarding specific diseases or vaccinations, they regularly communicate with parents on a variety of topics including required immunizations and health screenings. All Florida postsecondary educational institutions must provide detailed information concerning the risks associated with meningococcal meningitis and its associated vaccines to every student or to the student's parent if the student is a minor. As noted above, all Florida college and university students who live in campus dormitories are required to be immunized against meningococcal disease or decline the immunization by signing a waiver.[12]

Proposed Changes

The CS for HB 127 requires each district school board and private school governing body to provide every student's parent with detailed information about the causes, symptoms and transmission of meningococcal disease, and about the availability, effectiveness, and contraindications associated with recommended vaccines. The information is to be provided in accordance with DOH recommendations.

DOH is to adopt rules that specify the age or grade level of students for whom such information shall be provided. These rules are to be consistent with recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) concerning the appropriate age for vaccine administration.

DOH shall make available to school districts and private school governing authorities information concerning the causes, symptoms, and transmission of meningococcal disease; the risks associated with the disease; and the availability, effectiveness and contraindications of its associated vaccines.

Each school district and private school governing body shall determine the means and methods of providing this information to the student's parent.

The CS provides an effective date of July 1, 2006.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

[12] S. 1006.69, F.S.

Section 1: Amends s. 1003.22(10), F.S., relating to school-entry health examinations; creates new paragraph (c); requires district school board and private school governing authorities to provide every student's parent specified information about meningococcal disease in accordance with DOH recommendations; requires DOH to adopt rules consistent with recommendations of ACIP; requires district school boards and private school governing authorities to determine means and methods for providing information to students' parent.

Section 2: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2006.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Although the CS does not require adolescent vaccination against meningococcal disease, the Department of Health reports there is a potential cost to parents or private health insurance companies to cover the costs of vaccine and administration of vaccine for those parents who choose to have adolescents vaccinated. The department estimates the market price of the vaccine to be $75-$100 per dose.

Private school governing authorities may incur minor costs related to the provision of information about meningococcal disease to students' parents. However, the bill allows the private school governing body to determine the method for providing the information so they may select the most cost-effective method.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

School districts may incur minor costs related to the provision of information about meningococcal disease to students' parents. However, the bill allows the school district to determine the method for providing the information so they may select the most cost-effective method.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

The CS does not appear to require a city or county to expend funds or to take any action requiring the expenditure of funds.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

Meningococcal Disease and Immunization

The CS requires DOH to adopt rules specifying the age or grade level of students to receive the information regarding meningococcal disease consistent with recommendations of the CDC.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

Lines 54-65: It is unclear whether DOH is required to adopt rules addressing the causes, symptoms, etc. of meningococcal disease and its associated vaccine, or merely to make that information available to schools outside of rulemaking.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE & COMBINED BILL CHANGES

At its January 11, 2006 meeting, the Committee on Elder & Long-Term Care adopted an amendment to HB 127. The amendment removes Section 1 of the bill, requiring assisted living facilities to implement a program to offer immunizations against influenza and pneumococcal bacteria to all residents age 65 and older, in its entirety.

The Committee favorably reported a Committee Substitute.

This analysis is drafted to the Committee Substitute.

HS Reform Recommendations

Recommendations of the High School Reform Task Force

1) Upgrade Florida's high school graduation requirements to better prepare students for the 21st century. New graduation requirements:
    - Including rigorous core requirements
    - 4 years of mathematics including algebra and geometry or equivalent courses such as applied and integrated (level 2 or above)
    - Area(s) of specialization
    - Minimum GPA requirements
    - Earning a passing score on the 10th Grade FCAT
2) Provide for Differentiated Levels of Proficiency in content areas.
    - For example recognition obtained in each content area for:
        - Successful completion of courses such as honors, AICE, IB, AP, Dual Enrollment
        - Achievement at this level – GPA in area
        - Non-traditional ways of demonstrating "Outstanding Accomplishments"
3) Increase opportunities at the middle school level for earning high school level course credit by encouraging middle schools to offer a minimum of one high school course for high school credit with an emphasis on Algebra 1.
4) To ensure the foundation of academic skills in middle school, require minimum core course completion (required number in core areas) to exit grade 8 or enter high school.
5) Provide summer academies that give intensive intervention/remediation between grades 5/6, 6/7, 7/8, 8/9 as needed as a condition for promotion and credit recovery in high school. Particular emphasis must be placed on the transition from grade 8 to 9, with 9th grade summer academies to prepare struggling learners for high school. FCAT retakes should be allowed after the summer academies.
6) The Department will research the implementation of end-of-course exams in other states and Florida districts as a measure of students meeting higher expectations.
7) Help teachers meet higher expectations by providing data-driven, student specific, research-based professional development.
8) Help administrators meet higher expectations by providing instructional leadership training for principals.
9) Encourage the development of the opportunities for a high school student to earn a high school diploma and a higher level degree, certification, or competency at the same time.
10) Require career education consisting of a minimum of 9 weeks in at least one middle level grade: 6, 7 or 8.
11) Implement smaller learning communities, which may include (1) career clusters/academies in high school that may lead to industry certification or (2) other advanced academic studies.
12) Expand academic advisement and support services in secondary schools. Coordinate all planning with parental involvement and the student's academic and/or career plan (increase use of FACTS.org).
13) Provide the tools whereby middle grade students can focus on the future by the development of a 5 year educational plan to address high school and postsecondary goals.
14) Eliminate grade level retention in high school, with high school graduation being based on proficiency and earning the required credits and GPA.
15) Help middle and high schools infuse reading as part of the culture by ensuring Level 1 and Level 2 readers are served with intensive reading instruction, incentivize content area teachers to pursue the reading endorsement, providing engaging and diverse texts in both the media center and classroom libraries, and tying reading to all content area and elective courses. Ensure that literacy benchmarks are a part of all content areas.

Please visit www.fldoe.org/hsreform for more information on high school reform, including meeting materials and resources.

FHSAA

1006.20 Athletics in public K-12 schools.—

(1) GOVERNING NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The Florida High School Athletic Association is designated as the governing nonprofit organization of athletics in Florida public schools. If the Florida High School Athletic Association fails to meet the provisions of this section, the commissioner shall designate a nonprofit organization to govern athletics with the approval of the State Board of Education. The organization is not to be a state agency as defined in s. 120.52. The organization shall be subject to the provisions of s. 1006.19. A private school that wishes to engage in high school athletic competition with a public high school may become a member of the organization. The bylaws of the organization are to be the rules by which high school athletic programs in its member schools, and the students who participate in them, are governed, unless otherwise specifically provided by statute. For the purposes of this section, "high school" includes grades 6 through 12.

(2) ADOPTION OF BYLAWS.—

(a) The organization shall adopt bylaws that, unless specifically provided by statute, establish eligibility requirements for all students who participate in high school athletic competition in its member schools. The bylaws governing residence and transfer shall allow the student to be eligible in the school in which he or she first enrolls each school year, or makes himself or herself a candidate for an athletic team by engaging in a practice prior to enrolling in any member school. The student shall be eligible in that school so long as he or she remains enrolled in that school. Subsequent eligibility shall be determined and enforced through the organization's bylaws.

(b) The organization shall adopt bylaws that specifically prohibit the recruiting of students for athletic purposes. The bylaws shall prescribe penalties and an appeals process for athletic recruiting violations.

(c) The organization shall adopt bylaws that require all students participating in interscholastic athletic competition or who are candidates for an interscholastic athletic team to satisfactorily pass a medical evaluation each year prior to participating in interscholastic athletic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the student's candidacy for an interscholastic athletic team. Such medical evaluation can only be administered by a practitioner licensed under the provisions of chapter 458, chapter 459, chapter 460, or s. 464.012, and in good standing with the practitioner's regulatory board. The bylaws shall establish requirements for eliciting a student's medical history and performing the medical evaluation required under this paragraph, which shall include a physical assessment of the student's physical capabilities to participate in interscholastic athletic competition as contained in a uniform preparticipation physical evaluation and history form. The evaluation form shall incorporate the recommendations of the American Heart Association for participation cardiovascular screening and shall provide a place for the signature of the practitioner performing the evaluation with an attestation that each examination procedure listed on the form was performed by the practitioner or by someone under the direct supervision of the practitioner. The form shall also contain a place for the practitioner to indicate if a referral to another practitioner was made in lieu of completion of a certain examination procedure. The form shall provide a place for the practitioner to whom the student was referred to complete the remaining sections and attest to that portion of the examination. The preparticipation physical evaluation form shall advise students to complete a cardiovascular assessment and shall include information concerning alternative cardiovascular evaluation and diagnostic tests. Results of such medical evaluation must be provided to the school. No student shall be eligible to participate in any interscholastic

athletic competition or engage in any practice, tryout, workout, or other physical activity associated with the student's candidacy for an interscholastic athletic team until the results of the medical evaluation have been received and approved by the school.

(d) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (c), a student may participate in interscholastic athletic competition or be a candidate for an interscholastic athletic team if the parent of the student objects in writing to the student undergoing a medical evaluation because such evaluation is contrary to his or her religious tenets or practices. However, in such case, there shall be no liability on the part of any person or entity in a position to otherwise rely on the results of such medical evaluation for any damages resulting from the student's injury or death arising directly from the student's participation in interscholastic athletics where an undisclosed medical condition that would have been revealed in the medical evaluation is a proximate cause of the injury or death.

(3) GOVERNING STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION.—

(a) The organization shall operate as a representative democracy in which the sovereign authority is within its member schools. Except as provided in this section, the organization shall govern its affairs through its bylaws.

(b) Each member school, on its annual application for membership, shall name its official representative to the organization. This representative must be either the school principal or his or her designee. That designee must either be an assistant principal or athletic director housed within that same school.

(c) The organization's membership shall be divided along existing county lines into four contiguous and compact administrative regions, each containing an equal or nearly equal number of member schools to ensure equitable representation on the organization's board of directors, representative assembly, and committee on appeals.

(4) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—

(a) The executive authority of the organization shall be vested in its board of directors. Any entity that appoints members to the board of directors shall examine the ethnic and demographic composition of the board when selecting candidates for appointment and shall, to the greatest extent possible, make appointments that reflect state demographic and population trends. The board of directors shall be composed of 16 persons, as follows:

1. Four public member school representatives, one elected from among its public school representative members within each of the four administrative regions.

2. Four nonpublic member school representatives, one elected from among its nonpublic school representative members within each of the four administrative regions.

3. Three representatives appointed by the commissioner, one appointed from the two northernmost administrative regions and one appointed from the two southernmost administrative regions. The third representative shall be appointed to balance the board for diversity or state population trends, or both.

4. Two district school superintendents, one elected from the two northernmost administrative regions by the members in those regions and one elected from the two southernmost administrative regions by the members in those regions.

5. Two district school board members, one elected from the two northernmost administrative regions by the members in those regions and one elected from the two southernmost administrative regions by the members in those regions.

6. The commissioner or his or her designee from the department executive staff.

(b) A quorum of the board of directors shall consist of nine members.

(c) The board of directors shall elect a president and a vice president from among its

members. These officers shall also serve as officers of the organization.

(d) Members of the board of directors shall serve terms of 3 years and are eligible to succeed themselves only once. A member of the board of directors, other than the commissioner or his or her designee, may serve a maximum of 6 consecutive years. The organization's bylaws shall establish a rotation of terms to ensure that a majority of the members' terms do not expire concurrently.

(e) The authority and duties of the board of directors, acting as a body and in accordance with the organization's bylaws, are as follows:

1. To act as the incorporated organization's board of directors and to fulfill its obligations as required by the organization's charter and articles of incorporation.

2. To establish such guidelines, regulations, policies, and procedures as are authorized by the bylaws.

3. To provide an organization commissioner, who shall have the authority to waive the bylaws of the organization in order to comply with statutory changes.

4. To levy annual dues and other fees and to set the percentage of contest receipts to be collected by the organization.

5. To approve the budget of the organization.

6. To organize and conduct statewide interscholastic competitions, which may or may not lead to state championships, and to establish the terms and conditions for these competitions.

7. To act as an administrative board in the interpretation of, and final decision on, all questions and appeals arising from the directing of interscholastic athletics of member schools.

(5) REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY.—

(a) The legislative authority of the organization is vested in its representative assembly.

(b) The representative assembly shall be composed of the following:

1. An equal number of member school representatives from each of the four administrative regions.

2. Four district school superintendents, one elected from each of the four administrative regions by the district school superintendents in their respective administrative regions.

3. Four district school board members, one elected from each of the four administrative regions by the district school board members in their respective administrative regions.

4. The commissioner or his or her designee from the department executive staff.

(c) The organization's bylaws shall establish the number of member school representatives to serve in the representative assembly from each of the four administrative regions and shall establish the method for their selection.

(d) No member of the board of directors other than the commissioner or his or her designee can serve in the representative assembly.

(e) The representative assembly shall elect a chairperson and a vice chairperson from among its members.

(f) Elected members of the representative assembly shall serve terms of 2 years and are eligible to succeed themselves for two additional terms. An elected member, other than the commissioner or his or her designee, may serve a maximum of 6 consecutive years in the representative assembly.

(g) A quorum of the representative assembly consists of one more than half of its members.

(h) The authority of the representative assembly is limited to its sole duty, which is to consider, adopt, or reject any proposed amendments to the organization's bylaws.

(i) The representative assembly shall meet as a body annually. A two-thirds majority of the votes cast by members present is required for passage of any proposal.

(6) PUBLIC LIAISON ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

(a) The organization shall establish, sustain, fund, and provide staff support to a public liaison advisory committee composed of the following:

1. The commissioner or his or her designee.
2. A member public school principal.
3. A member private school principal.
4. A member school principal who is a member of a racial minority.
5. An active athletic director.
6. An active coach, who is employed full time by a member school.
7. A student athlete.
8. A district school superintendent.
9. A district school board member.
10. A member of the Florida House of Representatives.
11. A member of the Florida Senate.
12. A parent of a high school student.
13. A member of a home education association.
14. A representative of the business community.
15. A representative of the news media.

(b) No member of the board of directors, committee on appeals, or representative assembly is eligible to serve on the public liaison advisory committee.

(c) The public liaison advisory committee shall elect a chairperson and vice chairperson from among its members.

(d) The authority and duties of the public liaison advisory committee are as follows:

1. To act as a conduit through which the general public may have input into the decisionmaking process of the organization and to assist the organization in the development of procedures regarding the receipt of public input and disposition of complaints related to high school athletic and competition programs.

2. To conduct public hearings annually in each of the four administrative regions during which interested parties may address issues regarding the effectiveness of the rules, operation, and management of the organization.

3. To conduct an annual evaluation of the organization as a whole and present a report of its findings, conclusion, and recommendations to the board of directors, to the commissioner, and to the respective education committees of the Florida Senate and the Florida House of Representatives. The recommendations must delineate policies and procedures that will improve the implementation and oversight of high school athletic programs by the organization.

(e) The public liaison advisory committee shall meet four times annually. Additional meetings may be called by the committee chairperson, the organization president, or the organization commissioner.

(7) APPEALS.—

(a) The organization shall establish a procedure of due process which ensures each student the opportunity to appeal an unfavorable ruling with regard to his or her eligibility to compete. The initial appeal shall be made to a committee on appeals within the administrative region in which the student lives. The organization's bylaws shall establish the number, size, and composition of the committee on appeals.

(b) No member of the board of directors is eligible to serve on the committee on appeals.

(c) Members of the committee on appeals shall serve terms of 3 years and are eligible to

succeed themselves only once. A member of the committee on appeals may serve a maximum of 6 consecutive years. The organization's bylaws shall establish a rotation of terms to ensure that a majority of the members' terms do not expire concurrently.

(d) The authority and duties of the committee on appeals shall be to consider requests by member schools seeking exceptions to bylaws and regulations, to hear undue hardship eligibility cases filed by member schools on behalf of student athletes, and to hear appeals filed by member schools.

(e) A student athlete or member school that receives an unfavorable ruling from a committee on appeals shall be entitled to appeal that decision to the board of directors at its next regularly scheduled meeting or called meeting. The board of directors shall have the authority to uphold, reverse, or amend the decision of the committee on appeals. In all such cases, the decision of the board of directors shall be final.

(8) AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS.—Each member school representative, the board of directors acting as a whole or as members acting individually, any advisory committee acting as a whole to be established by the organization, and the organization's commissioner are empowered to propose amendments to the bylaws. Any other individual may propose an amendment by securing the sponsorship of any of the aforementioned individuals or bodies. All proposed amendments must be submitted directly to the representative assembly for its consideration. The representative assembly, while empowered to adopt, reject, or revise proposed amendments, may not, in and of itself, as a body be allowed to propose any amendment for its own consideration.

(9) RULES ADOPTION.—The bylaws of the organization shall require member schools to adopt rules for sports, which have been established by a nationally recognized sanctioning body, unless waived by at least a two-thirds vote of the board of directors.

History.—s. 293, ch. 2002-387; s. 2, ch. 2003-129; s. 70, ch. 2003-416.

A comprehensive proposal establishing general principles relating to eligibility; providing general definitions of terms relating to eligibility; establishing a student's school of residence throughout high school as that school in which he/she first enrolls upon beginning the ninth grade; establishing that any student who after having established residence in a school for any reason changes attendance to another school is a transfer student; establishing that a transfer student is restricted to participation on the sub-varsity level until he/she establishes residence in his/her new school by attending that school for one year; providing for a process through which waiver of the period of restricted eligibility can be sought; providing criteria; providing an effective date.

It is proposed to the Representative Assembly of the Florida High School Athletic Association that:

SECTION 1. Paragraph 11.2.6 is amended to read:

~~"11.2.6 A grading period is defined as one semester. A semester is defined as one half of a school year (approximately 18 weeks or 90 school days). This definition is applicable to all schools regardless of the type of class scheduling format (i.e., block, traditional, etc.) utilized."~~

Subsequent paragraphs are appropriately renumbered.

SECTION 2. Paragraph 11.2.9 is amended to read:

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~~"11.2.9 A student transferring into a member school under extenuating circumstances which prohibit securing a transcript from the previous school or country shall be ineligible to represent that member school until he/she has been enrolled in and established grades for one FULL semester. The details of each situation must be reported in writing to the Commissioner for approval, including student's name, date of entry and inclusive dates of previous semester.~~"

Subsequent paragraphs are appropriately renumbered.

SECTION 3. Section 11.01, "General Principles," is created to read:

"11.01 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

11.01.1 Participation a Privilege. Participation in interscholastic athletic programs by a student is a privilege, not a right. Students wishing to participate are required to adhere to the uniform minimum standards and maximum limitations set forth in state law, these bylaws and such policies and regulations that are adopted by the Board of Directors in its interpretation of said bylaws. School districts and/or individual member schools may adopt more stringent rules for the students under their direct supervision. No school district or individual member school may adopt any such rules that are less stringent than those of the Association.

11.01.2 Rationale for Eligibility Standards. Uniform standards and limitations governing eligibility are a necessary prerequisite to participation in interscholastic athletics, because: (a) they protect the opportunities of

qualified students to participate; (b) they ensure competitive equity among member schools; (c) they encourage academic achievement by student-athletes; and (d) they promote the health and well-being of student-athletes."

SECTION 4. Section 11.02, "General Definitions," is created to read:

"11.02 GENERAL DEFINITIONS

11.02.1 Eligibility. Eligibility means the privilege of participating in interscholastic athletics that is attained by complying with all minimum standards and maximum limitations for student-athletes, whether established by Florida Statutes, cooperatively determined by the member schools through the Association's bylaws, adopted by the Board of Directors in the Association's policies, adopted by a district school board for students in schools under its jurisdiction, or set by an individual member school for its own students.

11.02.1.1 Restricted Eligibility. Restricted eligibility means the privilege of participating in interscholastic athletics that is limited to some extent due to an individual's failure to comply with one or more of the minimum standards and maximum limitations established for student-athletes.

11.02.1.2 Eligible. Eligible means having attained and continuing to retain eligibility. An eligible student-athlete is one who has attained and continues to retain eligibility whether restricted or not.

11.02.1.3 Ineligible. Ineligible means failing to attain or retain eligibility. An ineligible student-athlete is one who has failed to attain or retain any eligibility.

11.02.2 Enrollment. Enrollment means attendance by a student in a class period in a school during the regular school year or participation by the student in an athletic practice at the school, whichever first occurs. The submission of an application or registration to attend a school or the acceptance for attendance at a school does not constitute enrollment in that school. Enrollment requires the physical presence of the student in a class period or at an athletic practice at the school. A student cannot be enrolled in more than one school at any time.

11.02.3 Residence. Residence means enrollment and attendance in a school by a student for one calendar year. A student is considered to have residence in the school in which he/she first enrolls upon beginning the ninth grade. If the student transfers attendance to a different school after establishing residence in a school, he/she must establish residence in the new school by attending that school for one calendar year.

11.02.4 Parent(s). Parent(s) means a student's biological parent(s), stepparent(s), adoptive parent(s), foster parent(s), legal guardian(s) as determined by a court of proper jurisdiction, or other adult(s) with whom the student has lived for not less than the previous one calendar year.

11.02.5 Calendar Year. A calendar year means 365 consecutive calendar days, except during a leap year when it

means 366 consecutive calendar days.

11.02.6 School Year. A school year means the 180 school days comprising the fall and spring semesters. Summer school, unless otherwise specifically stated in these bylaws, is not considered part of the school year.

11.02.7 Semester. A semester means one half of a school year, which is approximately 18 weeks or 90 school days.

11.02.8 Grading Period. A grading period means one semester, regardless of class scheduling format (i.e., block, traditional, etc.) utilized.

11.02.9 School. School means any school in any state, territory or country.

11.02.10 Member School. Member school means a school that is a member of the Association.

11.02.11 Varsity. Varsity means the highest level of interscholastic athletic competition offered by a school.

11.02.11.1 Sub-varsity. Sub-varsity means any level of interscholastic athletic competition subordinate to varsity that is offered by a school. Sub-varsity includes but is not limited to B-team, junior varsity and freshman programs in 9-12 high schools, as well as middle school programs in K-12 and 6-12 high schools."

SECTION 5. Section 11.3, "Residence," is amended to read:

"11.3 RESIDENCE

11.3.1 A student in grades 9 through 12 shall have residence and be eligible to represent ~~in~~ the school in which

the student first enrolls ~~each school year or makes himself or herself a candidate for an athletic team by engaging in a practice prior to enrolling in any member school~~ upon beginning the ninth grade. ~~The student shall be eligible in that school so long as he or she remains enrolled in that school and meets all other eligibility requirements.~~

11.3.1.1 Residence, for the purpose of applying the Association's eligibility requirements, does not refer to the home of the student but rather to enrollment and attendance by the student for one calendar year in a school. A student automatically establishes residence for his/her four-year limit of high school eligibility in the school in which the student first enrolls upon beginning the ninth grade.

11.3.1.2 A student in grades 9 through 12 who after having established residence in a school transfers attendance to another school shall be considered a transfer student and shall be required to establish residence in the new school subject to the provisions of Section 11.4 of these bylaws.

11.3.2 A home education student who participates in interscholastic athletics pursuant to 11.3.1 shall have residence and be eligible to represent the school in which the home education student first registers to participate in interscholastic athletics upon beginning the ninth grade or at such time thereafter whenever registration to participate first occurs. ~~The student referred to in 11.3.1 will remain eligible at that school even though a change of residence occurs so long as he/she remains enrolled in that school and~~

~~meets all other eligibility requirements.~~

11.3.2.1 A student who after having established residence in a school ceases to attend that school and enters a home education program shall be eligible to represent only the school in which he/she last had residence, provided the student was eligible to represent that school at the time he/she ceased attendance. ~~The student referred to in 11.3.1 will remain eligible at that school even though a change of residence occurs so long as he/she remains enrolled in that school and meets all other eligibility requirements.~~

11.3.2.2 A home education student who after having established residence in a school discontinues home education and enrolls in a school other than the school in which he/she had residence shall be considered a transfer student and shall be required to establish residence in the new school subject to the provisions of Section 11.4. ~~The student referred to in 11.3.1 will remain eligible at that school even though a change of residence occurs so long as he/she remains enrolled in that school and meets all other eligibility requirements.~~

11.3.3 A student who attends a charter school that does not sponsor an interscholastic athletics program and chooses to participate in interscholastic athletics at a different school pursuant to 11.4.1 shall have residence and be eligible to represent the school in which the student first registers to participate in interscholastic athletics

upon beginning the ninth grade or at such time thereafter whenever registration to participate first occurs. ~~A student who, after initially enrolling in, or engaging in an athletic practice at, any school during a school year, moves into a different school community with his/her parent(s) or other individual with whom he/she has lived continuously for a full calendar year and subsequently enrolls in a new school as a result of that move, shall be eligible the following week so far as residence is concerned. The student shall be eligible on the sixth day following his/her enrollment.~~

11.3.3.1 A student who after having established residence in a school ceases to attend that school and enters a charter school that does not sponsor interscholastic athletics shall be eligible to represent only the school in which he/she last had residence, provided the student was eligible to represent that school at the time he/she ceased attendance. ~~The student referred to in 11.3.1 will remain eligible at that school even though a change of residence occurs so long as he/she remains enrolled in that school and meets all other eligibility requirements.~~

11.3.3.2 A charter school student who after having established residence in a school ceases to attend the charter school and enrolls in a school other than the school in which he/she had residence shall be considered a transfer student and shall be required to establish residence in the new school subject to the provisions of Section 11.4. ~~The student referred to in 11.3.1 will remain~~

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~~eligible at that school even though a change of residence occurs so long as he/she remains enrolled in that school and meets all other eligibility requirements.~~

~~11.3.4 A student who, after initially enrolling in, or engaging in an athletic practice at, any school during a school year, moves into a different school community with his/her parent(s) or other individual with whom he/she has not lived continuously for a full calendar year and enrolls in a new school as a result of that move, shall be ineligible so far as residence is concerned.~~

~~11.3.5 The fact that guardianship papers have been issued, placing a student under the control of a person or persons other than his/her parent(s), does not establish eligibility. Residence with and support by any individual or individuals for a period of one calendar year does establish the residence of that individual or individuals as the residence of a student.~~"

SECTION 6. Section 11.4, "Transfer," is amended to read:

"11.4 TRANSFER

11.4.1 A student who having established residence in a school in grades 9 through 12 transfers attendance to another school shall be restricted to participation on the sub-varsity level until he/she has established residence in the new school by attending that school for one calendar year unless the transfer is in conjunction with a physical joint relocation of the student, his/her parent(s) and other individual(s) with whom he/she has been living to a new

address that makes it necessary for the student to attend a different school. ~~A student who initially enrolls in, or engages in an athletic practice at, one member school in a school year and transfers attendance to another member school during that same school year shall be considered to be a transfer student and therefore subject to the bylaws related to students who transfer from one school to another.~~

11.4.1.1 To be considered a physical joint relocation to a new address, the occupation of the new address by the student, his/her parent(s) and other individual(s)with whom he/she has been living must be full and complete ~~indefinitely and make it their fixed and permanent home~~. The former address must be abandoned, that is vacant, sold~~,~~ or rented to persons other than any member of the family, and may not be occupied for any purposes at any time by the student, his/her parent(s) or minor sibling(s). Before being deemed eligible by the principal of the school to which he/she transfers, the student and his/her parent(s) must attest in writing to the facts of the relocation and provide documentation that all personal belongings have been moved from the former address, mail is received at the new address, all utilities have been transferred to the new address, and driver's license, voter registration and other forms of legal identification have been changed to the new address. At the time of registration, the school to which the student transfers shall inform in writing the student and his/her parent(s) of the proof required for

eligibility and that the school's administration may verify the full and complete relocation by conducting an inspection of the former address, the new address or both. Under no circumstances can a student and his/her parent(s) occupy more than one address for eligibility purposes.

11.4.1.2 References to "other individual(s) with whom the student has been living" includes minor siblings and, depending on the specific circumstances that assure a full and complete relocation for the student, may include adult siblings, step-siblings, aunts, uncles and grandparents and others who have been a family unit and not merely co-habitants of the same dwelling who have been and remain financially self-sufficient. For the purposes of achieving a full and complete change of address, a "member of the family" who remains at the "former address" shall not be the student's parent(s), sibling(s) under the age of 18 or other family member(s) who is not financially self-supporting. The only family member(s) who remain at the former address must be 18 years of age or older and financially self-supporting.

11.4.1.3 The need to attend a different school as the result of relocation to a new address must be based on one of the following conditions:

(a) The student is no longer permitted to attend his/her old school by the district school board because the new address is outside the school's attendance zone; or

(b) Public transportation from the student's new address to the old school is not provided and the student does not have a means of personal transportation.

11.4.1.4 Should the student transfer in conjunction with a physical joint relocation and then subsequently relocate to another address within one calendar year of that transfer, the student shall be restricted to participation on the sub-varsity level for the remainder of that one calendar year period in the school to which he/she originally transferred, and for one full calendar year in any other school to which he/she transfers as a result of the subsequent relocation.

11.4.2 The Commissioner may waive the provisions of Bylaw 11.4.1 for the benefit of a transfer student when application for such a waiver is made by the principal of the member school to which the student transfers if it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the circumstances surrounding the transfer meets one or more of the following exceptions: ~~A student who enrolls in a member school following his/her initial enrollment in, or engagement in an athletic practice at, another school for that school year shall be ineligible to represent the new school he/she is attending for the duration of the school year. This rule shall not apply if the change of attendance from one school to another is accompanied by a corresponding change in residence on the part of the student's parent(s) or other individual with whom the student has lived continuously for a full calendar year, which makes it necessary for him/her to~~

~~attend a different school.~~

(a) The school to which the student transfers is one to which the student had applied upon initial entry into the ninth grade but was denied admission because the school or special program offered at the school was at capacity, and to which the student has now been accepted due to a vacancy in the school or that same special program offered at the school, provided the student enrolls in the school or special program at the first opportunity.

(b) The school to which the student transfers offers a magnet or other special program that commences in a grade higher than the ninth grade, provided the student applies for, is accepted to and enrolls in the program at the first opportunity.

(c) The school in which the student was enrolled is categorized as a failing school by the Florida Department of Education, provided the school was not categorized as a failing school at the time of the student's enrollment, the transfer is to a school that is not categorized as a failing school, and the transfer occurs at the first opportunity.

(d) The transfer is at the initiative and order of the district school board for other than athletic or disciplinary reasons, and was not the result of a request by the student or his/her parent(s). In such cases the student may enroll in the public school to which he/she has been assigned by the district school board or in another public

or nonpublic school.

(e) The student undergoes a necessary relocation from the home of his/her parent(s) at one address to the home of another individual(s) at a different address that makes it necessary for the student to attend a different school. "A necessary relocation" means that the conditions that cause the relocation are beyond the control of the student and/or his/her parent(s); work an unjust, unfair and unforeseeable hardship upon the student; and are such that none of the parties involved could reasonably have been expected to comply with the provisions of Bylaw 11.4.1.

(f) The student following his/her emancipation by marriage, court order or reaching the age of majority establishes a separate household at a different address that makes it necessary for the student to attend a different school. The student must show proof that he/she has established his/her own household and is not receiving financial support from anyone other than himself/herself. If under the age of 18, the student also must provide a copy of the emancipation order issued by the court.

(g) The student is a ward of the court or state and is required to relocate to a new address that makes it necessary for the student to attend a different school. A certified copy of the court order, together with a copy of the petition upon which the order was based and other evidence the court had to consider in issuing that order must be

provided. Temporary guardianship that is granted without approval of a court does not fulfill this requirement.

(h) The student who attends a private school, because of a financial hardship beyond the control of the family, is no longer able to afford the tuition and must transfer his/her attendance to a different school. The student or his/her family must provide proof that the change in the family's financial status has occurred since the student's enrollment in the private school and is significant enough to clearly demonstrate that the tuition cost of the school is no longer affordable. The student or his/her family further must provide proof that they have applied for and been denied financial assistance or show good cause as to why they did not apply for such assistance. Tuition increases in and of themselves are not considered a financial hardship.

(i) The home education cooperative in which the home-educated student participated is dissolved and the home education student registers to participate at another home education cooperative or school.

(j) The principals of both the student's old and new schools, provided both schools are members of the Association, certify that the transfer in their opinion is in the best educational interest of the student, is not motivated by reasons relating to athletic participation or disciplinary

action, and is not the result of recruitment.

11.4.3 An application for waiver of Bylaw 11.4.1 shall be made on a form provided for this purpose by the Commissioner. The form must be initiated and signed by the principal of the member school to which the student transfers, must indicate the exception(s) under which the waiver is being requested, must describe the circumstances surrounding the transfer, must be signed by the principal of the school last attended by the student, and must be submitted along with any supporting documentation to the Commissioner for his/her approval. A waiver is not granted until the form, fully executed by the principals of both schools, is reviewed and approved in writing by the Commissioner, and is on file in the office of the member school to which the student transfers. ~~The provisions of Article 11.4.2 may be waived if the benefit of athletic eligibility is requested in writing by the principal of the school to which he/she transfers and the principal of the school from which he/she transfers consents to such waiver in writing on a form to be furnished by the Commissioner. To be effective as a waiver of the provisions of Article 11.4.2, the properly executed original form must be filed in the office of this Association together with the annual eligibility report for the requesting school. Such waiver is not effective until both the annual eligibility report and the original application for waiver of the transfer rule are received in the office of this Association. A principal should consider not approving an application for waiver of the transfer rule when he/she has evidence that reasonably leads him/her to believe that:~~

~~(A) the student is being recruited;~~

~~(B) the student is transferring in whole or in part for athletic reasons; or~~

~~(C) the student is transferring because of disciplinary reasons and/or misconduct.~~

~~HOWEVER, a student who transfers to a member school without a corresponding change of residence on the part of the student's parent(s) or other individual with whom the student has lived continuously for a full calendar year, which makes it necessary for him/her to attend a different school, on or after the beginning of any sports season (first day of practice) shall not be eligible to compete in that sport for the duration of that school year.~~

11.4.3.1 A principal should not consent to an application for waiver of Bylaw 11.4.1 when he/she has evidence that reasonably leads him/her to believe that the student's transfer is motivated by reasons relating to athletic participation or disciplinary action, or is the result of recruitment. A transfer "motivated by reasons relating to athletic participation" is defined as, but not limited to:

(a) The student or his/her parent(s) is dissatisfied with the student's position on the team or the amount of playing time that he/she receives;

(b) The student or his/her parent(s) is dissatisfied with a coach at either a personal or professional level;

(c) The student or his/her parent(s) seeks relief from conflict with the philosophy or action

of an administrator, teacher or coach relating to sports;

(d) The student or his/her parent(s) seeks to avoid punitive action by the student's old school relating to athletic eligibility;

(e) The student follows his/her coach to another school to which the coach has relocated during the preceding one calendar year;

(f) The student seeks to participate with teammates or coaches with whom he/she has participated in non-school competition during the preceding one calendar year;

(g) The student or his/her parent(s) desires that the student play on a less successful or lower profile team in order to be ranked higher among the players on that team; or

(h) The student or his/her parent(s) desires that the student play on a more successful or higher profile team to gain a higher level of competition and/or more exposure to college or professional scouts.

11.4.3.2 Eligibility is not determined nor is the Commissioner bound by the action taken by either or both principals signing the application for waiver. The Commissioner instead shall have the discretion to investigate the accuracy of the application and to approve or deny the waiver based solely on the findings of his/her investigation.

11.4.4 The Commissioner may grant a waiver of Bylaw 11.4.1 for the benefit of a student only one time during that

student's four-year limit of eligibility and then only when the facts are clear, undisputed and supported by appropriate documentation. The Commissioner shall have broad discretion in applying the conditions of the exceptions under which he/she may grant a waiver to specific cases. The Commissioner may take into consideration not only the needs of the student involved, but also the best interests of all students in all member schools and the total interscholastic athletic program in general as he/she understands those interests. Should the Commissioner deny an application for waiver, the school making the application upon request of the student may appeal the decision of the Commissioner or request an undue hardship hearing in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of these bylaws. ~~A student who has participated as a member of a senior high school in interscholastic athletic competition during a school year prior to his/her application for membership in a home education cooperative shall be ineligible to represent that cooperative in interscholastic athletic competition for the duration of that school year unless a properly executed "Application for Waiver of the Transfer Rule" is obtained from the principal of the senior high school, and vice versa. A student who withdraws from a regular school program to enroll in a home education program and who is ineligible at the time of withdrawal from the regular school program due to his/her failure to meet academic or behavioral eligibility standards shall be ineligible to compete in interscholastic athletic competition as a home education student until he/she has successfully completed one semester in home education.~~

11.4.5 A student in grades 9 through 12 who after

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having established residence in a school transfers attendance to a recognized member boarding school shall be considered a transfer student and shall be required to establish residence in the boarding school subject to the provisions of Paragraph 11.4.1 of these bylaws. ~~If a student who has transferred from one school to another after his/her initial enrollment in a member school for that school year without a corresponding change of residence which made it necessary for him/her to change schools and has secured an application for waiver of the transfer rule then elects to transfer to a third school without a corresponding change of residence which would make it necessary for him/her to change schools during that same school year, it will be necessary for him/her to secure applications for waiver of the transfer rule from all schools previously attended within that school year.~~

11.4.6 A foreign exchange student who attends a member school under the auspices of a foreign exchange program approved by the Board of Directors is a transfer student and shall be restricted to participation on the sub-varsity level for a maximum period of one calendar year commencing with the date of the student's first enrollment in any U.S. school. ~~A student who transfers from a non-member school to a member school without a corresponding change of residence shall not be eligible to compete during a sports season unless his/her transfer occurred prior to the first day of practice for that sport.~~

11.4.7 A transfer student shall become eligible to represent his/her new school on the sixth day following the date of his/her enrollment in that school, provided the principal of the school has received an official written

transcript from the school from which the student transferred and has verified that the student meets all eligibility requirements. ~~A transfer student may represent the school to which he/she transfers on the sixth day following the date of his/her entry into that school, provided his/her transfer record has been received by the principal of the school to which he/she has transferred and provided he/she meets all eligibility requirements. A transfer record is an official written transcript signed by the principal or his/her authorized representative of the school from which the student transferred.~~

11.4.7.1 A transfer student for whom an official written transcript cannot be obtained shall not be eligible until he/she has attended his/her new school for one full semester, established a grade point average that satisfies the academic requirements of Section 11.2, and been submitted to the Commissioner for approval. The principal of the school in seeking approval of the student's eligibility from the Commissioner shall document the student's name, his/her date of enrollment, the inclusive dates of the previous semester, and shall provide an explanation as to why an official written transcript could not be obtained.

11.4.7.2 The principal of a member school shall verify the eligibility of a student who has transferred to another member school when requested to do so by the principal of that school.

11.4.8 The Board of Directors shall establish in its terms and conditions for each state championship series a

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date after which a transfer student shall not be eligible to represent the school to which he/she transfers in state championship series competition. This date shall be not earlier than two Saturdays prior to the week containing the initial level of competition in the state championship series. ~~The principal of a member school shall verify the eligibility status of a student who has transferred to another member school when requested to do so by the principal of the receiving school.~~

11.4.9 An ineligible student shall not become eligible as a result of a transfer. A transfer student who at the time of transfer has been declared ineligible for a period of time in his/her previous school by the administration of that school, the district school board that oversees that school, this Association or another governing association of which the previous school is a member shall not be eligible in his/her new school until that same period of time has expired. ~~A student who represents a school in a state championship series sponsored by this Association in a sport during the current school year may not transfer to another school and represent the school to which he/she transfers in the remainder of the state championship series in that sport.~~

~~11.4.10 A student who is ineligible, at the time of transfer from one school to another school, because of disciplinary action or because of unsatisfactory conduct, shall not be considered for eligibility at the school to which he/she transfers until he/she has been enrolled in that school for a full semester. Enrolling in a new school at the beginning of the school year does not decrease or eliminate the period of ineligibility.~~

~~11.4.11 A student who transfers to a member school from a school in another state or country who has been declared ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics by the school from which he/she is transferring or by a governing association of which that school is a member shall not be eligible to participate at the member school until he/she has been enrolled in that school for a full semester.~~

~~11.4.12 Participation by a student in non-school athletics (i.e. AAU, American Legion, club settings, etc.) on a team that is affiliated with any school other than the school which the student attends, or attended the prior year, followed by enrollment by that student in the affiliated school shall be considered prima facie evidence of recruiting by the school to which that student enrolled, or that the student enrolled in that school in whole or in part for athletic reasons. Unless this prima facie evidence of recruiting or that the student enrolled in the new school in whole or in part for athletic reasons is disproved by the school and student to the satisfaction of the Commissioner, the student shall be ineligible to represent that school in interscholastic athletic competition for a period of 365 consecutive days from the date of his/her enrollment in that school. A team affiliated with the school is one that is organized by and/or coached by any member of the coaching staff at, or any other person affiliated with, that school; and/or on which the majority of the members of the team (participants in practice and/or competition) are students who attend that school.~~

~~11.4.13 A student who transfers to a new school within one calendar year of the relocation of his/her coach to that~~

~~school without a corresponding change in residence shall be considered to have transferred for athletic reasons and shall not be eligible to participate in the sport(s) coached by that coach for one calendar year from the date of enrollment in the new school.~~

~~11.4.14 A student who marries and sets up residence in a different school community may represent the school which serves that community, provided the change in residence is immediate and he/she meets all eligibility requirements.~~

~~11.4.15 The assignment or reassignment of a student by the District School Board to a school other than that school in which he/she initially enrolled or at which he/she engaged in an athletic practice for that school year shall not bestow upon the student athletic eligibility in the new school unless benefit of eligibility is requested upon a form to be furnished by the Commissioner. This form must bear the signature of the District School Board Chairman, the District School Superintendent or the signature of the principal of the school from which the student transferred, and the principal of the school to which the student transferred. To be effective as a waiver of these provisions, the properly executed original form must be filed in the office of this Association together with the annual eligibility report for the requesting school. Such waiver is not effective until both the annual eligibility report and the original application for waiver of the transfer rule are received in the office of this Association. A student who transfers to a member school without a corresponding change of residence on or after the beginning of any sports season (first day of practice) shall not be eligible to compete in that sport for~~

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~~the duration of that school year.~~

~~11.4.16 Majority to minority assignments duly made by the District School Board shall not become effective until eligibility is requested on a form to be furnished by the Commissioner. The principal of the sending school should grant the waiver after investigating and determining that the student's transfer is from his/her racial majority to his/her racial minority school.~~

~~11.4.17 A student who is assigned to or otherwise enrolls in an out of district public school, or a nonpublic school, may be assigned to or enroll in the public school which serves his/her district without loss of eligibility, due to the transfer, provided he/she meets all other eligibility requirements. A student who transfers to a member school without a corresponding change of residence on or after the beginning of any sports season (first day of practice) shall not be eligible to compete in that sport for the duration of that school year.~~

~~11.4.18 If the District School Board changes the school to which a student is assigned to attend, the student shall be declared eligible by the principal of the school to which he/she has been transferred, provided he/she meets all other eligibility requirements and his/her name has been submitted on an annual eligibility report.~~

~~11.4.19 A student who transfers his/her residence from that of his/her parent(s) or other individual with whom the student has lived continuously for a full calendar year, to the home of another individual who resides in a different school community because of a court order committing one or both of those with whom he/she has been living to a~~

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~~correctional or state medical institution shall be eligible to represent the school in which he/she first enrolls or at which he/she engages in an athletic practice following the change in residence. The residence and transfer regulations do not apply to a student who returns to his/her home after honorable discharge from a state correctional institution or to a student who returns to his/her home after serving as a page in the Congress or the State Legislature.~~

~~11.4.20 A student who transfers his/her residence from that of his/her parent(s) or other individual with whom the student has lived continuously for a full calendar year to the home of another individual who resides in a different school community because of the death of one or both of his/her parents or other individual shall be eligible to represent the school in which he/she first enrolls or at which he/she engages in an athletic practice following the change in residence.~~

~~11.4.21 In the event that a student becomes a ward of the State of Florida and is placed in a foster home, the student will be eligible so far as residence is concerned so long as he/she is enrolled in that school. Any subsequent transfer of residence that requires a change of schools shall render the student ineligible.~~

SECTION 7. This proposal shall take effect July 1, 2006.

# # #

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

PreK - 12 Education Committee

Addendum A

Meeting
Tuesday, February 7, 2006
1:15 — 2:45 p.m.
Morris Hall

Allan G. Bense
Speaker

Ralph Arza
Committee Chairman

Florida House of Representatives

Allan G. Bense
Speaker

PreK-12 Education Committee

Ralph Arza, Chair
Representative Loranne Ausley
Representative Ellyn Bogdanoff
Representative Marti Coley
Representative Frank Farkas
Representative Kenneth Gottlieb

Joe Pickens, Vice Chair
Representative Stan Mayfield
Representative Dave Murzin
Representative Curtis Richardson
Representative Trey Traviesa

AGENDA
February 7, 2006

I. Chairman's Opening Remarks

II. HB 127 CS Immunizations by Hays

III. High School Reform Task Force Recommendations Presentation

IV. Florida High School Athletic Association Rule regarding Residence and Transfer Discussion

V. Chairman's Closing Remarks

VI. Adjournment

FPEA
Florida Parent-Educators Association
Florida's largest nonprofit, all-inclusive homeschool family association

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February 5, 2006

To the members of the House Pre-K Through 12 Committee:

The Florida Parent-Educators Association is opposed to the new bylaw passed by the Florida High School Athletic Association on January 24, 2006, intended to control athletic recruiting. The new bylaw limits a student's participation to the school at which he/she first enrolls in ninth grade. According to the bylaw, if a student transfers after ninth grade, he/she must participate at a sub-varsity level or lose a year of eligibility if the school has no sub-varsity team.

One immediate concern about this bylaw is that at 14, the age of a typical ninth-grader, students are still developing physically and discovering their interests and talents. With this in mind, they need the flexibility to explore their options and find the right fit. Unlike professional athletes, high-school students have not signed contracts to play for a particular school or team. To limit their options at this time in their life is inconsistent with both current law and legislative philosophy, which allows a student to choose a school at the beginning of each school year.

The FPEA represents over 10,000 families in Florida who have chosen to teach their children at home. These families have undertaken this awesome responsibility because they want to focus their developmental energies on their children so as to mold their character, provide individual instruction and develop their God-given abilities. Parents who home-educate their children tend to be quite resourceful in finding the opportunities necessary to further each child's distinct interests, skills and training. Many have sacrificed time, material well-being and career advancement to focus their efforts with their children in this way.

Just like other students, some of these home-educated children have athletic skills that can only be developed to their fullest extent in the highest-caliber competitive environment available. The Legislature already recognizes the importance of extracurricular activities to the development of students; s.1006.15 (2) F.S. states that "participation in a comprehensive extracurricular and academic program contributes to student development of the social and intellectual skills necessary to become a well-rounded adult."

In light of this, in 1996 it became necessary for home-educating parents to ask the Legislature to pass a law to change an FHSAA bylaw that discriminated against home-educated students. Ten years after the passage of that law, the FHSAA has again

passed a bylaw that will limit the possibilities for students to reach their full potential, discriminate against home-educated students and require students to remain in situations that may not be in their best interests. Over these last 10 years the Legislature has created many choices for parents and students: magnet programs, charter schools, virtual schools, scholarships to private schools and open enrollment in public schools. This new bylaw is inconsistent with the school-choice movement as so codified, as such limiting the choices of parents and students in order to address those few schools that break recruiting rules. This bylaw will deny all parents, regardless of their educational choices, the opportunity to find the best teachers, environment and social setting for their children. Thus, requiring a child to stay in the school in which he/she first enrolls is not in the best interest of the child.

Florida Statute 1006.15(5) states that "any organization or entity that regulates or governs interscholastic extracurricular activities of public schools . . . shall not discriminate against any eligible student based on an educational choice of public, private, or home education." The exceptions under the new bylaw discriminate against home-educated students because the only way they can transfer to another school after ninth grade is if the child's parents physically relocate or if the home-education cooperative ceases to exist. Public-school students have exceptions allowing them to transfer if the move is in their best educational interests. Home-educated students are not given the opportunity to transfer, even if a transfer may be in their best interest, simply because they don't receive their education at a public or private school.

Therefore, we are asking the Legislature to consider *all* the children in Florida — whether educated publicly, privately or at home — and make sure their opportunities to participate in athletics are not limited or taken away by the organization appointed by the Legislature to govern such extracurricular activities. We call on the Legislature to take action in the best interest of all children, ensuring they have equal opportunity to reach their full potential.

Sincerely,

Cheryl P. Boglioli
State Chairman
Florida Parent-Educators Association

The Home Education Foundation

"Home Educators' Voice at the Capitol"

www.flhef.org
PO Box 12563
Tallahassee, FL 32317-2563

February 6, 2006

TO: The Honorable Ralph Arza and Members of the House PreK-12 Committee
RE: The New FHSAA Bylaw on Residence and Transfer
FROM: Brenda Dickinson, President of the Home Education Foundation

The Home Education Foundation (HEF) has been very involved in the extracurricular activities statutes since 1994. The Craig Dickinson Act, initiated by the HEF, passed in 1996 and opened extracurricular activities to home education students. This same law created the Public Liaison Advisory Committee to oversee the operation of the Florida High School Activities Association (FHSAA) and report annually to the Legislature. It was the Public Liaison Advisory Committee which worked with Sen. Sullivan and Rep. Andrews to restructure the FHSAA in 1997, remove all extracurricular activities, except athletics from this association, and established a governance model for the association. The Legislature determined that the FHSAA was not operating in the best interest of students or schools and that they needed to step in.

The FHSAA has worked under this new model very well over the last 10 years. However, recent unsubstantiated complaints by some schools that recruiting is taking place in other schools has led the FHSAA to pass new by-laws which are in contradiction to s.1006.20 F.S. The new by-law addresses the alleged recruiting by taking away students' rights to transfer each year as stated in s.1006.20(2)(a). Recruiting is not defined in statute but is defined in the FHSAA policies as "the use of undue influence and/or special inducement by anyone associated with a school in an attempt to encourage a prospective student to attend or remain at that school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics." Penalizing students for transferring after first enrolling in a school in ninth grade is in conflict with school choice and penalizes students for the actions of adults. If students are recruited for athletic purposes only because of some inducement by an adult, then the adult or school should be held accountable and sanctioned.

The new by-law centralizes the power for determining transfers in the office of the Commissioner. It gives the Commissioner broad discretionary power in applying the conditions of the exceptions. This opens the transfer process up to arbitrary decisions and invites abuse. It places the decision in the hands of the Commissioner and his staff to approve or deny requests for waiver of the transfer rule. Undue influence, thus negative recruiting, can easily be used by the FHSAA or the school principal by denying a transfer. Although the decision can be appealed to a Sectional Appeals Committee, that Committee is comprised of 4 members representing school districts and 1 representing private schools. This sets up a completely biased and unfair appeals process for students in private and home education programs, unless the student is allowed to transfer at the beginning of each school year as stated in s.1006.20(2)(a). This by-law could open the FHSAA up to more lawsuits, more appeals and possibly a withdrawal of the private schools from the FHSAA; private schools currently make up 1/3 of the membership.

There has been a great deal of prejudice and suspicion regarding recruiting by private schools over the last 15 years. Twice, there has been a move on the part of the public schools and the FHSAA Board to create

two separate play-offs, one for public schools and one for private schools. Some private schools have threatened to pull out and start their own association. However, they have ultimately decided that it was not in the best interest of students. Two separate leagues may work in the more densely populated areas of the state but would not work in sparsely populated areas. Students in the less populated areas would have to travel great distances, sometimes on school nights, to play the nearest school. Recruiting, however, is not limited to private schools. Some school boards have passed policies to attempt to stop recruiting within the school district.

The new by-law is in conflict with Florida Statute 1006.20((2)(a) and attempts to stop recruiting by eliminating transfers and completely changing the concept created by the Legislature in 1997. The Legislature intended for the parent and student to have the right to choose the school best suited for the student at the beginning of each school year. The decision regarding what is best for a child would be taken from the parent and left to the discretion of the FHSAA Commissioner. If the Commissioner uses broad discretion and agrees with the parent in the majority of the cases, then what is the purpose of the rule? If the Commissioner decides that some students' reason to transfer is acceptable and others are not, then the decisions become arbitrary. Politics and favoritism easily become part of the decision. Who can make that decision better than the child's own parent? How is it possible for the Commissioner to consider the needs of the student better than the parent? How is the Commissioner going to determine what is in the best interest of all students in all member schools and the overall interscholastic athletic program? Even though there is an appeal process, the Sectional Appeals Committees will be reluctant to rule against a decision of the Commissioner, and, if the Commissioner approves the transfer, it will never go to the Sectional Appeals Committee. The problem with enforcement of recruiting now is that the principals do not want to take the responsibility for reporting recruiting; they want to pass it on to the Commissioner.

The new FHSAA by-law regarding residence and transfer also violates s. 1006.15(5)(b) and discriminates against students based on their educational choice of public, private or home education. This new by-law provides no exception for home education students to transfer to a different school, public or private, after ninth grade unless there is a corresponding change of residence with their parents or if the home education cooperative in which they participate ceases to exist. Most of the home educated students in Florida do not participate in home education cooperatives. Under s. 1006.15(3)(c) F.S. home educated students are allowed to participate in a public or private school and they, like other students under s. 1006.20((2)(a), could choose to transfer at the beginning of each school year in the same way public or private school students are allowed to transfer. However, this new FHSAA by-law will not give them the same opportunity to change schools, because their transfer would not be for educational reasons and clearly violates the intent of the Craig Dickinson Act.

This new by-law will not stop recruiting. It may instead allow some students to transfer because their parents may be more educated and can frame their appeal for a waiver better than parents who are not as attuned to the permissible exceptions to the transfer rule. In 1997, the Legislature set up a governance structure at the local level where the competing schools could best determine whether a waiver is in the best interest of all parties. Prior to that legislation, students had no due process in this Association.

The current statutes, while not perfect, have been working fairly well. If the FHSAA cannot find a way to stop recruiting, then it may be time for the Legislature to consider laws that deal equitably with recruiting. The Home Education Foundation is willing to work with this Committee to find a solution which is in the best interest of all students.

Brenda Dickinson President

Robert Muni Past Chairman of FPEA North Central Florida

Guy Coburn, Esq. Central Florida

Pamela Hatchell At-Large

Paul Moran,Esq. Southwest Florida

Bruce Buckson North Florida

Chris Taylor, Esq. Southeast Florida

TO: The Honorable Ralph Arza and the members of the House PreK-12 Committee

RE: The new FHSAA Bylaw

FROM: Bob and Pam Tebow, parents

As the parents of three former high school athletes, we would like to address the transfer rule that the FHSAA recently passed. In our opinion, the rule needs to be overturned! At the heart of our American experience is the exercise of freedom and competition, and we strongly believe that the opportunity to transfer to another school for any reason should be afforded by the laws of the State of Florida.

In the spirit of freedom, parents should be free to choose the best situation for their children, whether it is for athletic, academic, religious, or other reasons. We have the responsibility to choose the best fit for out children, where they have the opportunity to be happy and successful. In other areas of life, we choose music teachers, tutors, churches, neighborhoods, colleges, careers, etc. Our family, for example, has chosen to homeschool our five children, and we are very grateful for the various laws that have provided the freedom for us to do so.

In the spirit of competition, if parents can choose the child's coaches, then schools have more accountability to hire a coach who would positively represent their school and community, who has the skills and character to bring out the best in each athlete, and who will better equip those in his charge for their future. Coaches would have the accountability to continue learning about their chosen areas, to take their responsibility seriously of helping to shape young lives, and to hold themselves and their athletes to a higher standard. Why do we expect so little from those who wield the most influence? In other areas of life, competition keeps the best people in the top jobs!

As a personal illustration, we did "shop" for a program that would be a right fit for our son, Tim Tebow. When he was in ninth grade, he played defense for a state championship team; yet his dream was to play quarterback. We were honest with our coaches from the beginning -- as parents, our first responsibility was to our son, not a school. We wanted to give him the opportunity to develop his God-given talent and to achieve his life-long dream of playing quarterback; even if it meant leaving a program that his two older brothers had played in. We found a program with a newly hired coach who was knowledgeable in and committed to the passing offense, who had the character to mold young men, and who believed in our son. We went from a state championship team to a 2-8 team, with no winning tradition. We investigated the law, rented an apartment in the county, and completed all the necessary paperwork. It was, indeed, a sacrifice, but one that we will <u>never</u> regret. You may know the end of the high school story. Tim left the program this December with a state championship ring, a scholarship to the University of Florida, and a relationship with a coaching staff that will forever mark his life. How thankful we are that we had the freedom to choose!

The proponents of this law may be confusing parental choice with recruiting. Our choice was never an issue of recruiting. After recently completing two years of recruiting by colleges, we understand recruiting. High schools did not recruit us. We recruited them by seeking a coach and a program that was a match for our son, given his abilities and dreams.

To illustrate the difference that a coach makes, another personal example deals with the contrast between two baseball coaches in the same program. The first coach knew baseball, but had a very foul mouth and a negative attitude. He demeaned the players and alienated the parents. The team hated practicing and had a loosing season. The next year, there was a new coach, and the same players, except for the team's best player who graduated. The new coach had high standards athletically and morally, which the players were required to follow, and he demanded much as athletes and students; yet his concern for his players motivated them to play at a new level. The athletes, parents, and coaches had strong, positive relationships, and the team went to the State Championship. The difference was the coach! And what a difference he made in all the young lives he influenced!

In a positive program, we have seen kids with very little self-esteem reevaluate their worth, athletes step up to do more than anyone would have dreamed possible, coaches love kids enough to help make up for a missing family member, a young person raise his personal standards in every area of life because a coach believes in him, and athletes get scholarships because the coaches worked hard on their behalf.

On the negative side, in our years of high school sports, we have observed discouraged yet talented kids give up sports, parents with political and financial clout influence the roster, athletes deserving scholarships come up short because of self-centered coaches, and athletes who wished to transfer be threatened by a coach.

Our appeal to you is to put the best interest of young athletes ahead of political issues. Freedom and competition have proven to be valuable ideals for our country, and they do greatly benefit families who seek the best interest for their high school athletes.

FLORIDA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
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D. MICHAEL MCCARRON, PH. D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATEMENT RELATING TO FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION RULE #6

The Florida Catholic Conference, thorough its committee of Catholic school superintendents, is evaluating the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) rule -- #6-Transfer of Students -- -as it becomes a state legislative issue.

Although the committee of Catholic school superintendents, known as the Schools Executive Committee (SEC), has not adopted an official position as to the aforementioned rule, it shares the FHSAA's concerns as relating to the recruitment of student athletes and to that end, will support policy initiatives that address recruiting.

But there is shared concern that rule #6 will, if implemented, impinge upon the rights of parents and their children who desire an opportunity to transfer to another school in grades 9-12 within their respective counties and without changing residential addresses.

The Catholic Conference has steadfastly supported school-choice options for families so parents, as the first and foremost educators of their children, can select the schools that are in keeping with their religious preferences, value system, morality and other opportunities that may avail themselves by transferring to another high school.

Because rule # 6 is of great concern to parents, their children, both the non-public and public school communities, the Schools Executive Committee will continue assessing this rule with the objective to formulate an official position as soon as possible. It is for that reason that no one affiliated with Florida Catholic schools can speak as to this issue on behalf of the Catholic school community at this time.

Any Catholic school representative who speaks publicly about this rule before such time that an official state- wide position is undertaken would be limited to express a perspective on behalf of himself or herself or a single school.

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FAANS Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools
www.faans.org

February 6, 2006

TO: The Honorable Ralph Arza and Members of the House PreK-12 Committee
RE: The New Rule of the FHSAA
FROM: Ken Wackes, President, Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools

Nine of the ten member associations of The Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools (FAANS) that accredit high schools have taken a position in opposition to the new FHSAA rule determining the eligibility of transfer students and limiting such to junior varsity competition for 365 days. We believe this new rule is a direct threat to our financial existence, violates our perception of educational mission and philosophy, and is a heavy-handed limitation forced on the private sector, which currently represents approximately 40% of the membership of the FHSAA.

The following is a listing of some of our perspectives on the new rule.

1. The new rule violates existing state statute and seeks to circumvent that which is clearly stated in the statute specifically granting all high school students athletic eligibility at the high school where they report for the first day of the school year. To limit transfer students to junior varsity participation is an obvious attempt by the FHSAA to narrowly meet the "letter of the law" while diminishing the Legislature's intent and the spirit of the statute regarding athletic competition.

2. The new rule hinders the freedom of parents in choosing the school they believe to be best for their children. The new rule violates the spirit and intent of the current law when it was passed by the Legislature, which was to create a "seamless system of education" in the state and to create the possibility of "school choice" for parents. It impacts home school education in a similar fashion. It reflects an anti-nonpublic school bias concerning school choice and comes from a perspective that seeks the elimination of competition based upon achievement and the free market economy.

3. The new rule violates what every professional knows about the way children grow and develop. No child is fully mature, permanently placed, or healthily settled at the age of 14, 15, or 16 years of age. Often changes in a child's school setting must be achieved for the sake of the child's good mental, emotional, academic, or spiritual health. What may be envisioned initially as the best choice for a child, by placement in a large public high school in grade 9, may become an obvious difficult setting after one or two academic years. At times children make improper choices in friends, academic offerings, or suffer from peer pressure or peer adversity, and a new school setting is essential. At other times a child is discovered to be better suited to a large school setting. However, the new FHSAA rule ignores what is best for children.

4. The new rule violates the free market philosophy of our nation. How can the transfer of a student whose parents are willing to pay a costly private school tuition, in addition to supporting public education through taxation, be viewed as being improper or even as the result of supposed "recruiting?" Such mentality defies reasonable logic, except for those who have a bias against the free market economy and attracting families through the school enrollment process based upon proven ability to meet the needs of a child.

5. The new rule creates a very specific economic problem for nonpublic schools that rely on tuition paying families for their existence. Most nonpublic high schools historically receive numerous transfer students each year. To tell a potential family seeking to enroll a child that their child will be denied athletic activity

upon enrollment for 365 days will have a negative impact upon school choice, the non-public school, and limit admissions.

6. The new rule reveals a lack of understanding by public school oriented leaders, like the present FHSAA Commissioner, concerning the desire to educate the total child in the nonpublic schools of the state. To categorize athletic participation as a "privilege" and not a "right" sounds strange to the ear of the parent willing to pay a high tuition for his/her child, but is told that a major portion of most children's educational experience in nonpublic schools is not accessible. In most nonpublic schools over 60% of the high school enrollment participates in some portion of the athletic program, due primarily to the small size of the schools. Everyone gets a chance to do many things in such a setting. Athletic participation is not confined to the elite or the otherwise highly gifted child. This is contrary to the large public high schools where only the elite have a chance to participate. In nonpublic schools the athletic program is as valid and integral a part of the development of the total child as any other program in the school. An athletic coach is considered a teacher and shaper of student lives and their character development. They are held as accountable for their impact on children as is the classroom teacher.

7. Neither FAANS as an umbrella association, or any other nonpublic school organization, with schools represented in the membership of the FHSAA, were consulted or informed of this action by the FHSAA. Further, previous input on the new rule and even possible alternative language recommended by nonpublic school heads and directors of organizations was ignored by the FHSAA Commissioner.

8. The majority of nonpublic schools in Florida are religious schools. The majority of these are operated by a diocese or a local church. The goal of the sponsoring organization encompasses a mission to families and children of a spiritual nature. When these ministries impact families, they often see the direct correlation between spiritual commitment and the school setting for their children. To the religious mind, things cannot be compartmentalized. Work is spiritual. The home is spiritual. The school is spiritual. The new FHSAA rule denies to children of families, who have experienced religious conversion or a higher degree of spiritual commitment, the right to participate fully in the programs of that diocesan or church-related school and thus is discriminatory and biased.

9. The new rule will seriously threaten the safety of younger and smaller students at the junior varsity level because all transfer students, no matter their size, age, or ability level, will be limited by the proposed amendment to junior varsity competition. It also violates the reason why junior varsity teams exist, specifically to train and assist younger students who are not ready for varsity participation. It creates a major problem for smaller nonpublic schools that do not have an enrollment large enough to field junior varsity teams.

Time is needed for all sectors of the broad school community to participate in resolving the problems which this new rule purports to address. All stakeholders represented within the FHSAA should be afforded the opportunity to give input and to engage in mutual problem solving. We are very eager to be a part of the problem solving process and believe that we have alternative, but equally satisfactory, approaches to address issues which the new rule only frustrates but does not resolve.

Florida Council of Independent Schools

1211 North Westshore Boulevard, Suite 612 ◆ Tampa, Florida 33607
phone: (813) 287-2820 ◆ Fax: (813) 286-3028 ◆ www.fcis.org
C. Skardon Bliss, Executive Director

To: Representatives on the House PreK - 12 Committee

Subject: Opposition to the new FHSAA by-law regarding Residence and Transfer

The new FHSAA by-law is in direct violation of the language and intent of 1006.20(2)(a) F.S. -- Athletics in public K-12 schools.

Florida Statute 1006.20(2)(a) states that "The by-laws governing residence and transfer SHALL allow the student to be eligible in the school in which he or she first enrolls EACH school year or makes himself or herself a candidate for an athletic team by engaging in a practice prior to enrolling in any member school."

Clearly the intent of the statute is to allow students to choose the school he/she attends AND be eligible to participate in athletics EACH school year.

This statute goes on to read "Subsequent eligibility shall be determined and enforced through the organization's by-laws." Subsequent eligibility refers to changes in residence and transfers during the school year, not the next school year.

The new FHSAA by-law regarding residence and transfers restricts eligibility to the school in which the student first enrolls or participates in athletics beginning in the ninth grade and requires a student to play at a sub-varsity level for one year in the school to which he transfers.

Students who, for a variety of reasons including the opportunity to play on an athletic team, may choose a smaller school, which may not have a sub-varsity team will be forced to decide between losing a year of eligibility and selecting a better school environment.

If the Legislature had intended that participation would be limited to a sub-varsity level, it would have been stated so in this very specific eligibility language. If the statute needs to be clarified, the word "varsity" could be added so that it reads "eligible to participate in varsity athletics."

To be in compliance with the law, the FHSAA By-laws MUST allow students to be eligible in the school in which he or she first enrolls each school year.

Florida Statute 1006.20(2)(b) reads "The organization SHALL adopt bylaws that specifically prohibit the recruiting of students for athletic purposes."

This statute requires the organization to deal with recruiting as a separate issue. Recruiting is not defined in statute, but is a different issue than residence and transfer. It is defined in the FHSAA policies as "the use of undue influence and/or special inducement by anyone associated with a school in an attempt to encourage a prospective student to attend or remain at that school for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics."

Under this definition undue influence and/or special inducement would involve something a school, a coach, or another adult could impose on or offer to a student. Students have no inducements to offer. Therefore, the penalties for recruitment should be written and enforced against schools, adults or coaches, not students.

The clear intent of the law is to allow students to choose a school, but prohibit schools from recruiting. The new by-law takes away a student's right to choose in order to stop recruiting and is in violation of the intent of the statute.

Member institutions of the FHSAA should bear the responsibility for their actions and ensure the integrity of the program. The FHSAA should harness its efforts to better educate member schools about and enforce the rules prohibiting recruiting. The nonpublic school community has already shared with the FHSAA staff ways that this could be effectively accomplished.

The new FHSAA by-law regarding residence and transfer violates s. 1006.15(5)(b) and discriminates against students based on their educational choice of public, private or home education.

This new by-law provides only a couple of exceptions for private school students to transfer to a different school, public or private, after ninth grade unless there is a corresponding change of residence with their parents or the parents cannot afford the tuition. The exception which allow the two principals to sign waivers have not worked for a number of private schools in the past and under the new rules will most likely be passed onto the Commissioner to make that decision.

The new FHSAA by-law regarding residence and transfer ignores and violates what is true about life, freedom, and a free market economy upon which our nation is based.

Children are not mature at the age of 14-17 years of age. Major issues of social, academic and self-image adjustment frequently occur requiring/demanding a change in school enrollment for the sake of the child. The FHSAA, ignoring what is best for a child, assumes that all students transferring are highly-skilled, much sought after athletes and thereby frustrate legitimate transfers for the sake of the mental, emotional, and academic health of countless child.

Freedom to choose is a hallmark of American democracy. To deny to a family willing to pay $10,000+ in tuition for a nonpublic school education, for example, full access to that school's programs is un-American, anti-family, and certainly a target for litigation.

The new FHSAA by-law regarding residence and transfer ignores and violates what is true about spirituality in American life.

The vast majority of non public schools in Florida are religious in their mission and in their life. Many are ministries of churches that seek the conversion of families to their religions and denominations, or seek to promote in families a deeper commitment to a religious way of life. Many families, upon experiencing such conversion or growth, seek, as a consequence, to enroll their children in a corresponding school. Not once, in all of the verbiage generated by the FHSAA staff, is this factor and frequent occurrence acknowledged or addressed.

Possible remedies to resolve this issue.

It is likely that such a rule would be overturned in court if it were ever challenged. However, the Legislature could clarify the intent of this section of law and save the time and expense of going to court. The Legislature or the Commissioner of Education could designate another organization to govern high school athletics as specified in s 1006.20 F.S. The best option would be to clarify the statute.

Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, Inc.
Capitol Office

January 10, 2006

The Honorable Representative Ralph Arza
14645 North West 77th Avenue
Hialeah, FL 33014

Dear Representative Arza:

I am in receipt of correspondence from FACCS schools (see sample attached) and other accrediting associations that represent private schools participating in the Florida High School Athletic Activities Association (FHSAA) regarding pending changes to the FHSAA By-Laws. In review of the correspondence and the proposed amendment, there appears to be a move by the leadership of the FHSAA that will discriminate against and thereby detrimentally affect all private schools, if passed, in addition to violating the intent of previously well-crafted changes to the Florida Statutes that would prohibit such actions.

As a result of such imminent actions (January 23, 2006), we would appreciate any assistance you and the Legislature may provide to prohibit such actions from taking place.

Respectfully,
Howard G. Burke, EdD
Executive Director
FACCS
PO Box 10009
Tallahassee, FL 32302
850.422.0065

Christian Schools of Florida

January 11, 2006

The Honorable Representative Ralph Arza
14645 North West 77th Avenue
Hialeah, FL 33014

Dear Representative Arza:

Greetings! I come to you again with an extremely important and pressing issue – the Proposed Amendment #6 to the By-Laws of the Florida High School Athletic Association, being proposed by present Commissioner Stuart to the Representative Assembly on January 23, 2006. We need your assistance at once.

It was my pleasure to serve as the nonpublic school member of the Public Liaison Committee appointed by the Legislature in the late 1990's due to the upheaval being caused by the FHSAA in state. As you will remember, it was a period of great upheaval, numerous law suites, injunctions against the FHSAA, and the control of athletics in the hands of a few in Gainesville. I participated in drafting the proposals for the restructuring of the governance of the FHSAA, which were subsequently adopted by the Legislature.

Proposed Amendment #6 will return us back to the days of chaos, ill will, and certain animosity between many nonpublic school members and public school members.

Here are my complaints against the proposed amendment, which, at heart does one primary thing: it removes athletic eligibility for one full academic year from all students who transfer high schools and restricts them to junior varsity level participation.

1. The amendment violates the spirit and intent of the current law when it was passed by the Legislature, which was to create a seamless system of education in the state and to create the possibility of school choice for parents.

2. The amendment will seriously impact financially nonpublic schools who customarily receive numbers of new high school students each year at each grade level, based upon many the needs and desires on the part of parents.

3. The amendment will seriously threaten the safety of younger and smaller students at the junior varsity level because all new students, no matter their size, age, or ability level. or age will be limited by the proposed amendment to junior varsity competition.

4. The amendment apparently has taken advantage of an oversight by the legislature when the recent revision of the laws governing high school athletics were written since the legislature failed to specific the eligibility to be allowed in state law as "varsity;" this move by the FHSAA being in direct violation of the legislation's intent.

5. The amendment creates a serious impediment to the legislature's goals for school choice.

6. The amendment will return the practical governance of the FHSAA to the condition it was in when the legislature had to intervene with governing statutes.

Member Organization: The National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA), The Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools (FAANS)
P.O. Box 1764 • Crystal River, FL 34423
954-593-4787 • into@ChristianSchoolsFL.org • www.ChristianSchoolsFL.org

As president of the Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools, I assure you that the vast majority of the non-public and the home school constituencies are opposed to this amendment. Due to the way in which this amendment was created and then announced to the general public, we do not have time to block this amendment at the FHSAA before its passage. However, you can let your concern be registered to the FHSAA in your position and take whatever action with the legislature that you feel to be appropriate. I am also aware that Alicia Casanova, who serves with me as the Vice President of FAANS has registered the same complaints with you about this matter.

I look forward to your help and your positive, constructive leadership in this matter.

Cordially,

Ken Wackes
Executive Director

PreK - 12 Education Committee

Addendum B

Meeting
Tuesday, February 7, 2006
1:15 — 2:45 p.m.
Morris Hall

Allan G. Bense
Speaker

Ralph Arza
Committee Chairman

High School Reform Task Force Membership List

John Winn, Commissioner of Education

Evelyn Lynn, State Senator, Florida Senate, Volusia, Putnam, Clay, Marion Counties

Rudy Crew, Superintendent, Honorary Member, Miami-Dade County

Bill Vogel, Superintendent, Seminole County

Lou Miller, Superintendent, Madison County

Peg Smith, Superintendent, Volusia County, FADSS Task Force Chairperson

Nancy Bostock, School Board Chairperson, Pinellas County

Stephanie Arma Kraft, School Board Member, District 4, Broward County

James Lawson, Area Superintendent for the Central Learning Community, Orange County

Dr. Daniel Tosado, Asst. Superintendent, Secondary Curriculum & Instruction, Miami-Dade County

Joan Minnis, Principal, Thurgood Marshall Fundamental Middle School, Pinellas County

Cherry Fitch, Principal, Gulf Breeze High School, Santa Rosa County

Nathan Collins, Principal, Palm Beach Lakes High School, Palm Beach County

Rosann P. Sidener, Ed.D., Principal, Booker T. Washington High School, Miami Dade County

Judith Marty, Principal, Mater Academy Charter High, Miami Dade County

Pamela Denise Ashley, Director, Steps to the Future Christian Academy, Collier County

Fred Williams, Teacher, William T. McFatter Technical School, Broward County

Kathy Corder, TOY Regional Finalist, Chiles High School, Leon County

Daniel E. Snyder, TOY Regional Finalist, Fernandina Beach High School Teacher, Nassau County

David Mosrie, Executive Director, Florida Association of School Superintendents

Wayne Blanton, Executive Director, Florida School Boards Association

Jim Warford, Executive Director, Florida Association of School Administrators

Bob Morris, Chairman, Ramar Group Companies, Council of 100 Recommendation

Sherri Hampton, Teacher, Sumter County, FEA Recommendation

Melissa Harden, Parent Involvement Coordinator, PTA Recommendation

Brenda Speed, Parent of a Leon High School Student, Leon County

Edwin Massey, President, Indian River Community College

James Robert Richburg, President, Okaloosa-Walton College

Recommendations of the High School Reform Task Force

Change High School As We Know It

1) Upgrade Florida's high school graduation requirements to better prepare students for the 21st century. New graduation requirements:

   - Including rigorous core requirements
   - 4 years of mathematics including algebra and geometry or equivalent courses such as applied and integrated (level 2 or above)
   - Area(s) of specialization
   - Minimum GPA requirements
   - Earning a passing score on the 10th Grade FCAT

2) Provide for differentiated levels of proficiency in content areas.
   For example recognition obtained in each content area for:
   - Successful completion of courses such as honors, AICE, IB, AP, Dual Enrollment
   - Achievement at this level – GPA in area
   - Non-traditional ways of demonstrating "Outstanding Accomplishments"

3) Eliminate grade level retention in high school, with high school graduation being based on proficiency and earning the required credits and GPA.

4) Implement smaller learning communities, which may include (1) career clusters/academies in high school that may lead to industry certification or (2) other advanced academic studies.

Reading

1) Help middle and high schools infuse reading as part of the culture by ensuring Level 1 and Level 2 readers are served with intensive reading instruction, incentivize content area teachers to pursue the reading endorsement, providing engaging and diverse texts in both the media center and classroom libraries, and tying reading to all content area and elective courses. Ensure that literacy benchmarks are a part of all content areas.

INNOVATIONS

1) Encourage the development of the opportunities for a high school student to earn a high school diploma and a higher level degree, certification, or competency at the same time.

2) The Department will research the implementation of end-of-course exams in other states and Florida districts as a measure of students meeting higher expectations.

A STRONG MIDDLE SCHOOL FOUNDATION

1) Increase opportunities at the middle school level for earning high school level course credit by encouraging middle schools to offer a minimum of one high school course for high school credit with an emphasis on Algebra 1.

2) To ensure the foundation of academic skills in middle school, require minimum core course completion (required number in core areas) to exit grade 8 or enter high school.

3) Provide summer academies that give intensive intervention/remediation between grades 5/6, 6/7, 7/8, 8/9 as needed as a condition for promotion and credit recovery in high school. Particular emphasis must be placed on the transition from grade 8 to 9, with 9th grade summer academies to prepare struggling learners for high school. FCAT retakes should be allowed after the summer academies.

4) Require career education consisting of a minimum of 9 weeks in at least one middle level grade: 6, 7 or 8.

HELPING STUDENTS TO FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

1) Provide the tools whereby middle grade students can focus on the future by the development of a 5 year educational plan to address high school and postsecondary goals.

2) Expand academic advisement and support services in secondary schools. Coordinate all planning with parental involvement and the student's academic and/or career plan (increase use of FACTS.org).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1) Help teachers meet higher expectations by providing data-driven, student specific, research-based professional development.

2) Help administrators meet higher expectations by providing instructional leadership training for principals.

Please visit www.fldoe.org/hsreform for more information on high school reform, including meeting materials and resources.

Florida Diploma
Major/Minor Option (24 credits total)

This diploma proposal combines relevance and rigor into one seamless goal for high schools students.
Relevance: A student will major in an area in which he/she has a particular strength or interest.
Rigor: Each student can choose the level of challenge they want to attain in their major area.

Core Courses	Credits
English (Courses for level 1 and 2 students must focus on reading)	4
Math (All students must take and pass Algebra I and Geometry)	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
PE	1
CORE TOTAL: 15 credits	

	Major/Minor Options (credits in addition to the core)	
Major Areas of Study (In addition to these areas, local school boards can submit other majors and minors to the State Board of Education for approval)	**Major Requirements**	**Minor Requirements**
Humanities (Courses such as English, humanities, music, fine and/or performing arts)	4	3
English (Courses in literature and writing)	4	3
Communications (Courses such as journalism, debate, speech, mass media)		
Math (Math courses such as linear Algebra, abstract algebra, math analysis, analysis of functions, calculus, AICE further mathematics, multivariate calculus, differential equations, applied mathematics, geometry, analytic geometry, integrated math, advanced topics in mathematics, liberal arts math, probability and statistics, trigonometry, discrete mathematics, etc.)	4	3
Science (Science courses such as biology, botany, anatomy and physiology, ecology, limnology, zoology, biotechnology, genetics, earth/space, astronomy, space technology/engineering, environmental, integrated, marine, scholar energy, physical, chemistry, physics, nuclear radiation, Agriscience, etc.)	4	3
Advanced Math and Science	4	3
History ((History courses such as American, African American, Florida, Latin American, Eastern and Western Heritage, American through 1920, Vietnam War, World History, Civil War, etc.)	4	3
Social Studies (History courses such as American, African American, Florida, Latin American, Eastern and Western heritage, American through 1920, World, Civil War, etc. Also anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, global studies, political science, comparative governments, sociology, psychology etc.)	4	3
The Arts (Performing and fine arts)	4	3
Foreign Language	4	3
Career Specialization (to be developed)	4	3
Physical Education	N/A	3
Electives (Or students could elect to earn a double major or double minor instead)	2	
MAJOR/MINOR/ELECTIVE TOTAL: 9 CREDITS		

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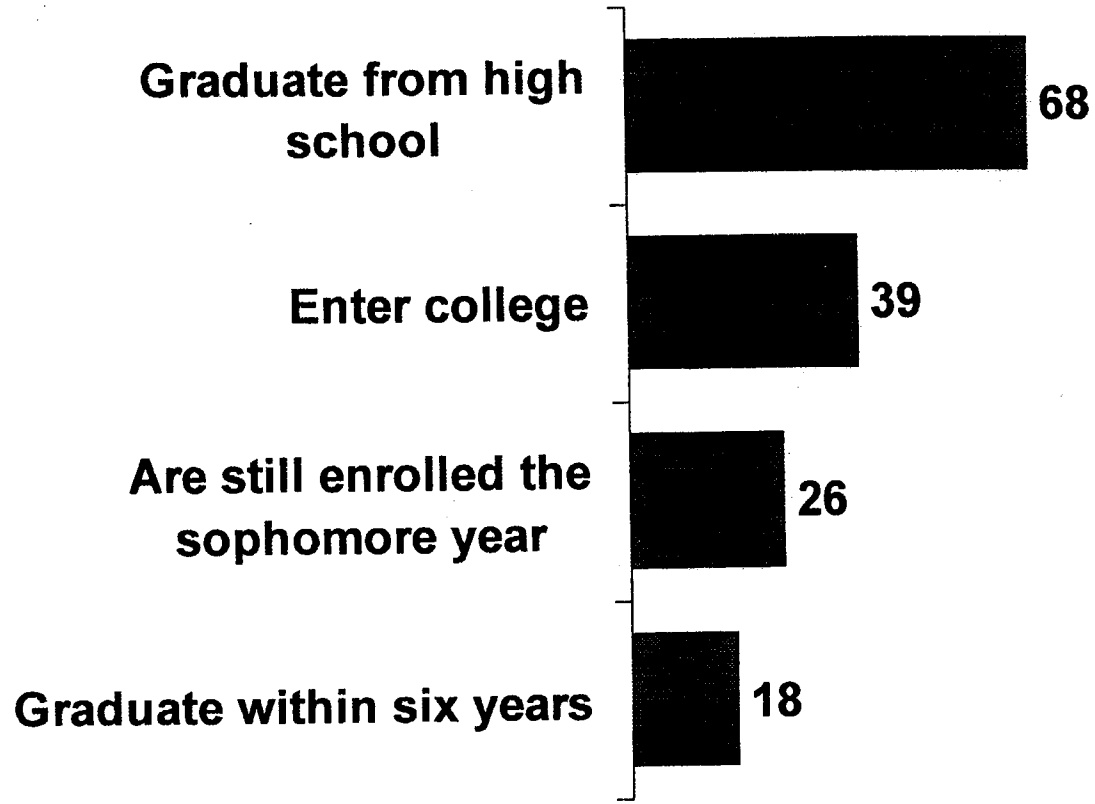
Challenge to Lead

For every 100 ninth graders ...

United States, 2002 College Graduates



Source: *NCHEMS analysis of NCES and ACT data.*

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Quality and Efficiency in Colleges and Universities

Challenge to Lead

Getting More Students to Complete Certificates and Degrees

- Why is getting more students to complete certificates and degrees important?
- Where are we on education participation, persistence and completion of degrees?
- Why will getting more students to complete degrees be more challenging than ever?
- What do we need to do to get more students to remain in college and get a degree?

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Challenge to Lead

Why is getting more students to complete degrees and certificates important?

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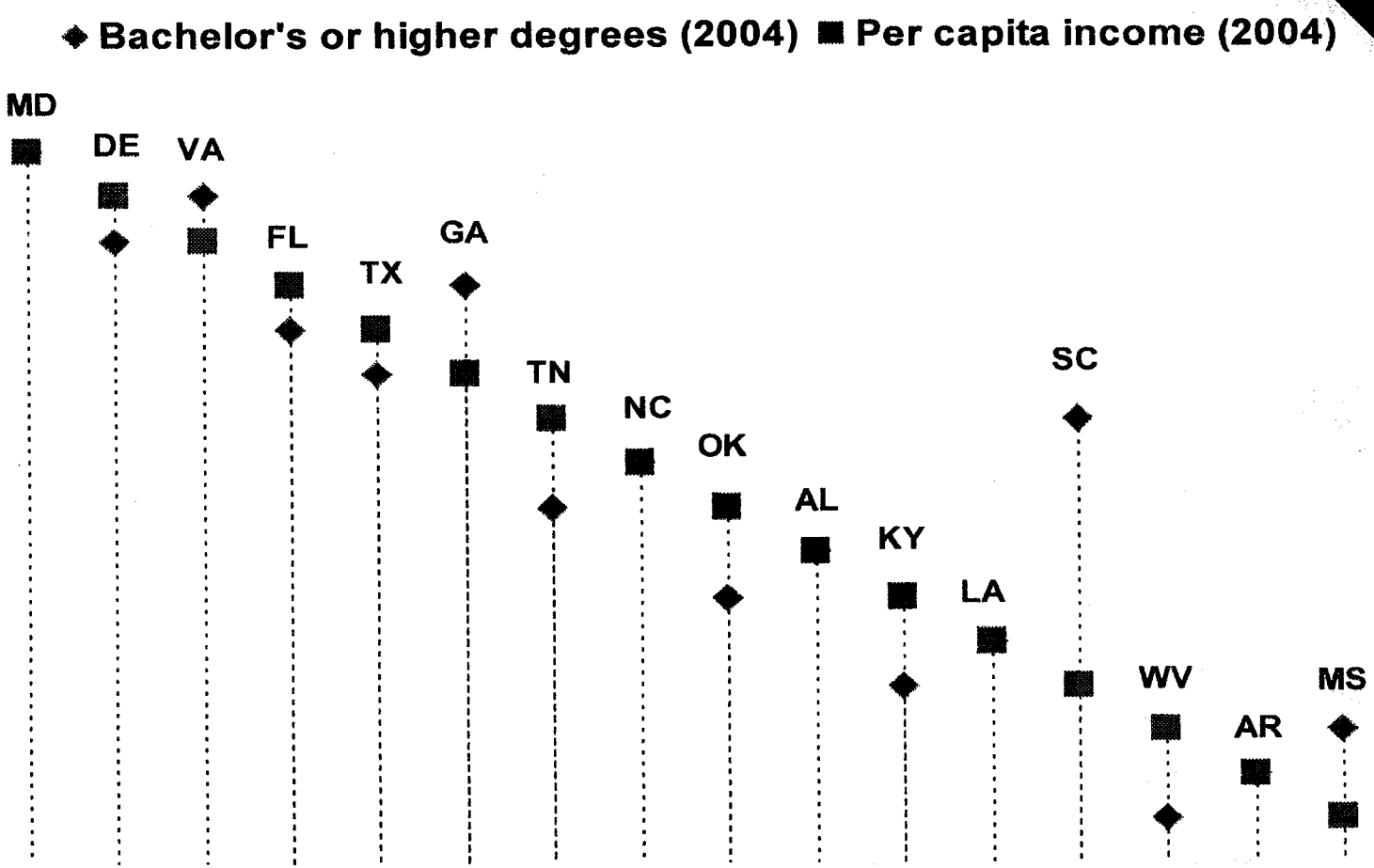
Challenge to Lead

Income is Highly Related to Adults Having a Bachelor's



Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, 2005.*

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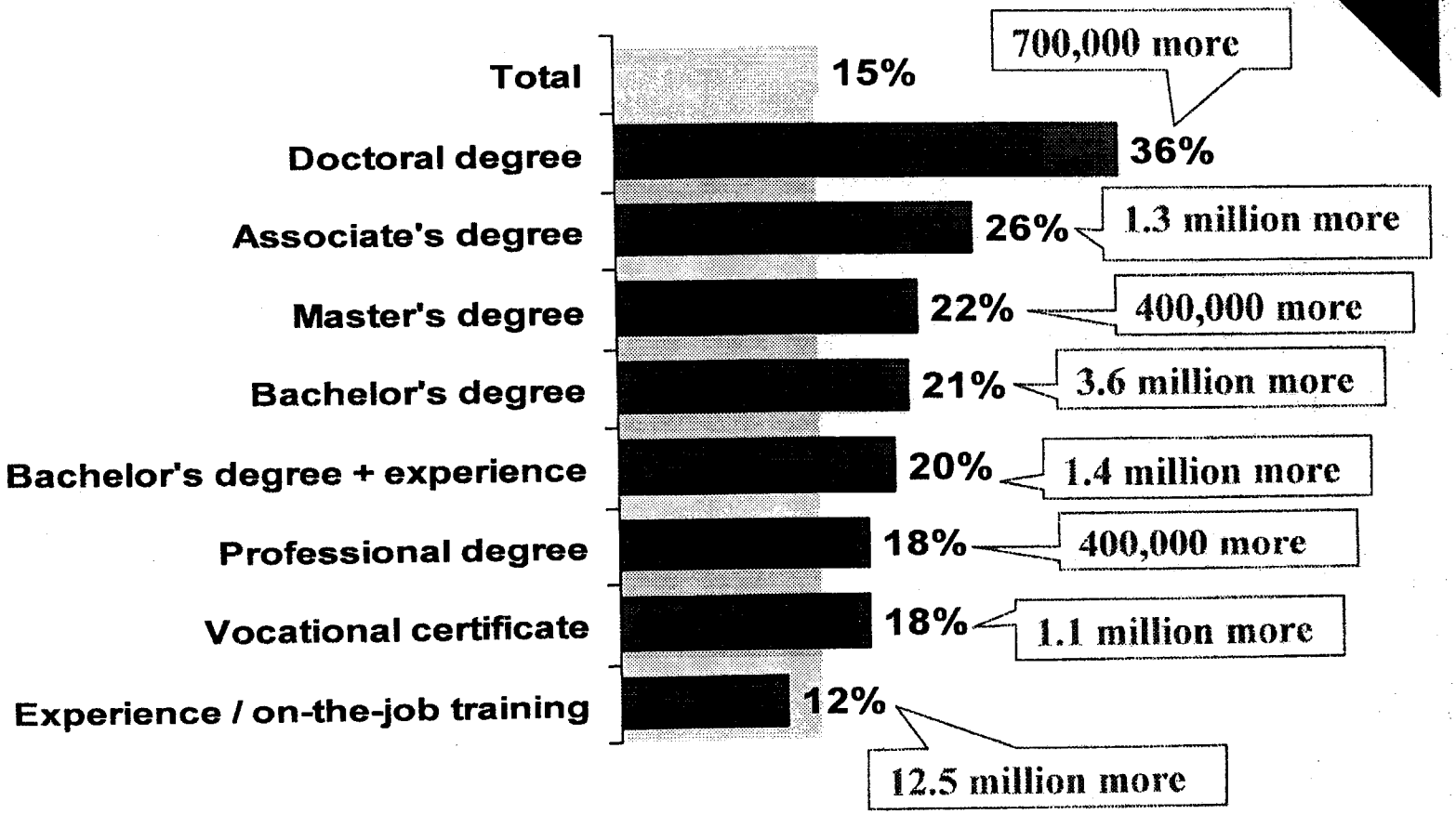
Challenge to Lead

Projected Increases in Jobs

United States, 2002 to 2012



Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, 2005.*

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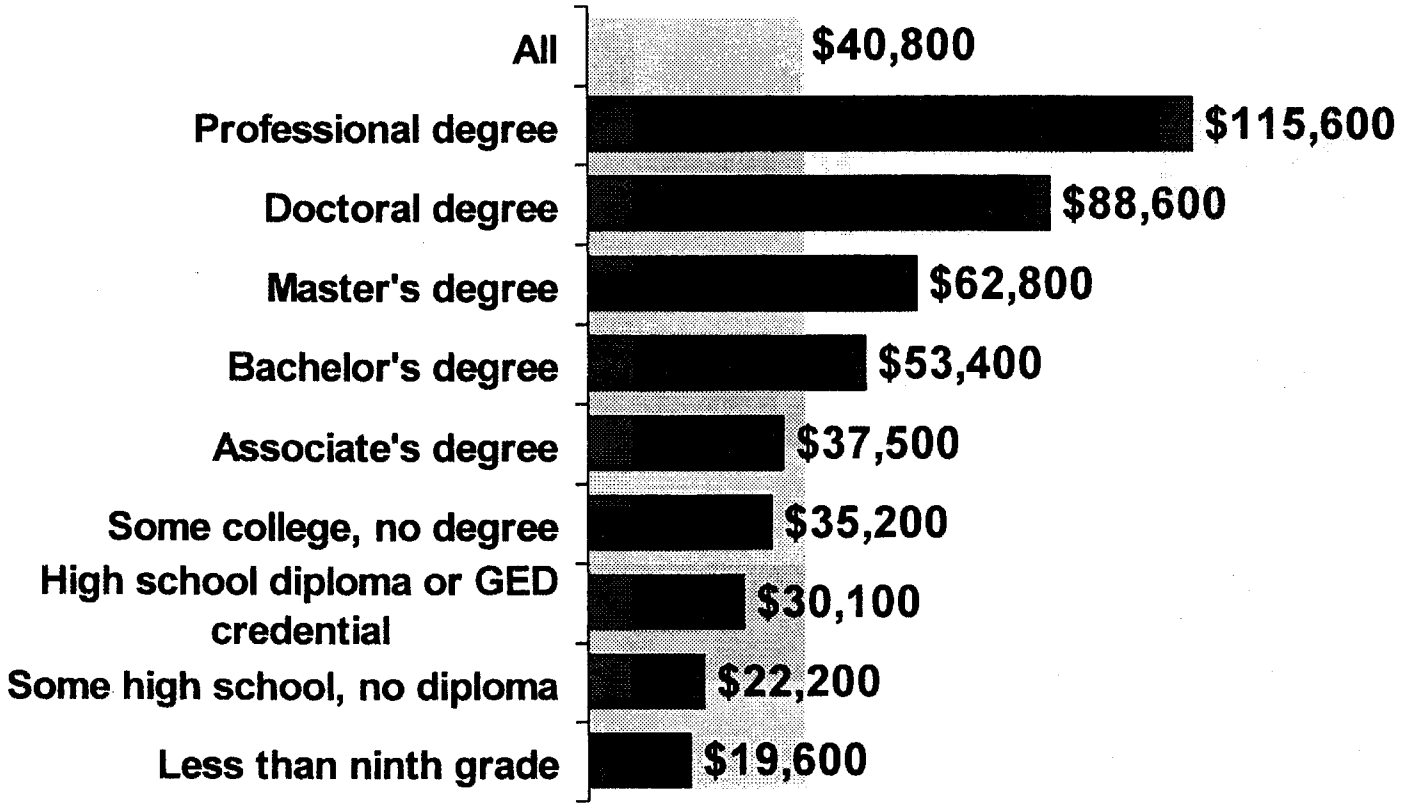
Challenge to Lead

Average Annual Earnings of Adults Ages 25 or Older

United States, 2003



Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, 2005.*

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Challenge to Lead

Where are we on education participation, persistence and completion of degrees?

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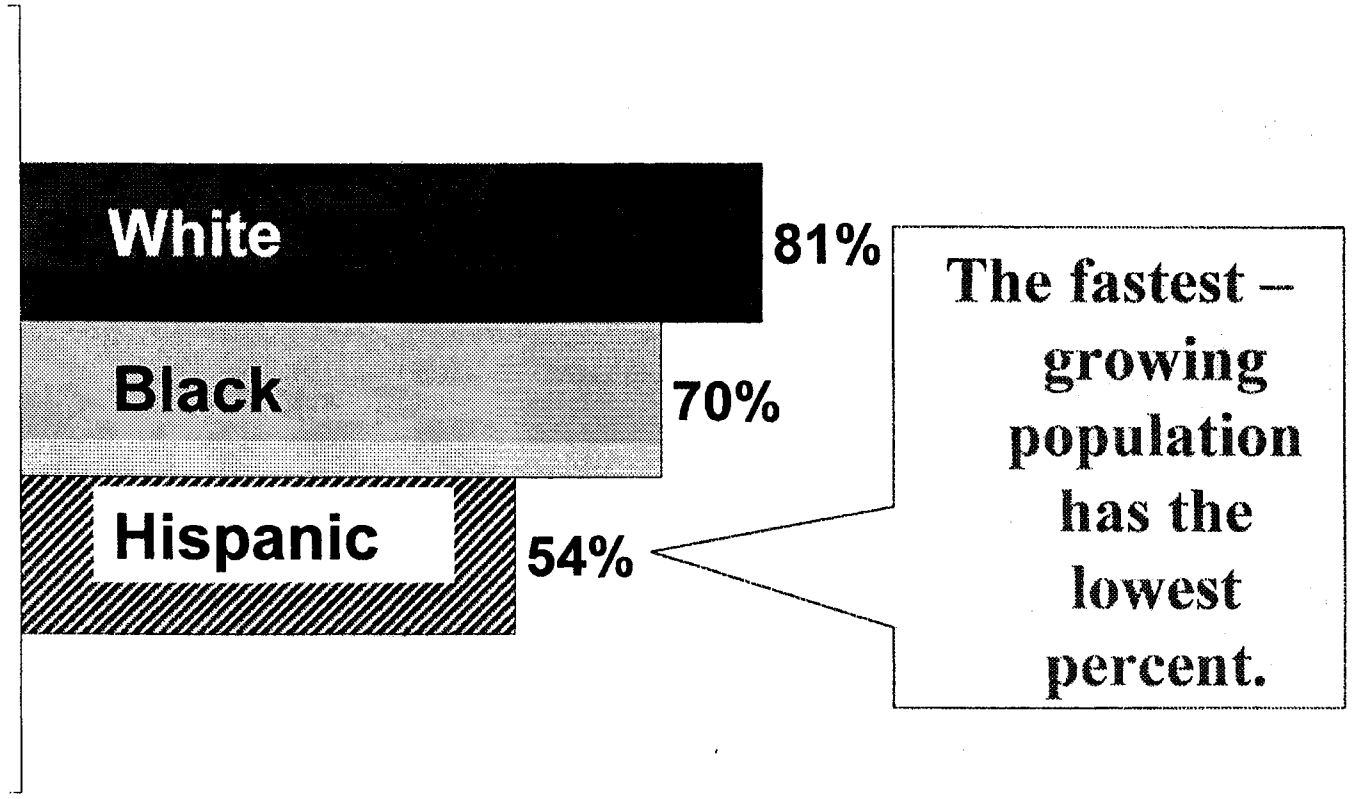
Challenge to Lead

Adults with High School Diplomas or GED Credentials

25 or Older, SREB States, 2000



Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, 2005.*

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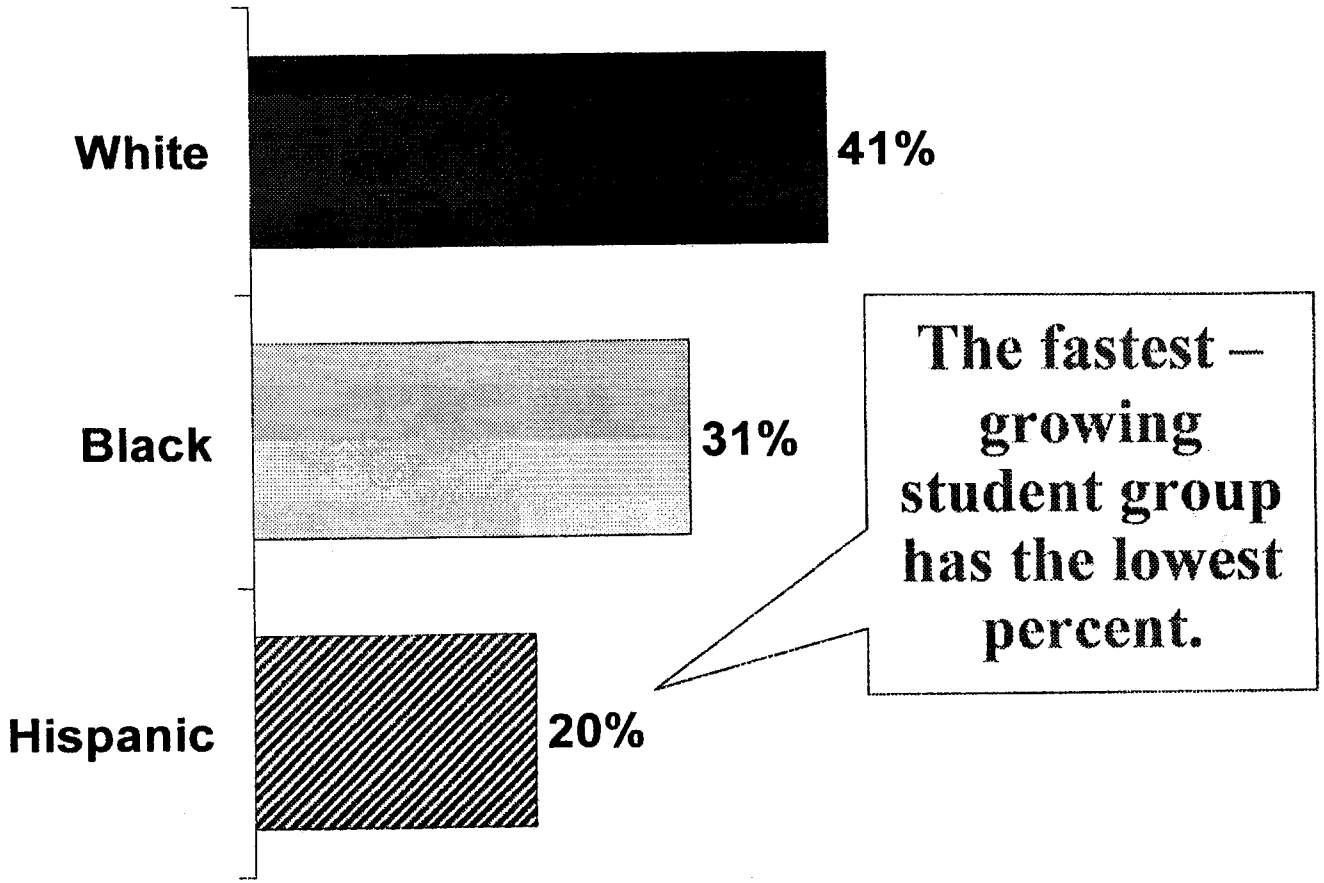
Challenge to Lead

18- to 24-Year Olds Attending College

United States, 2002



Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, 2005.*

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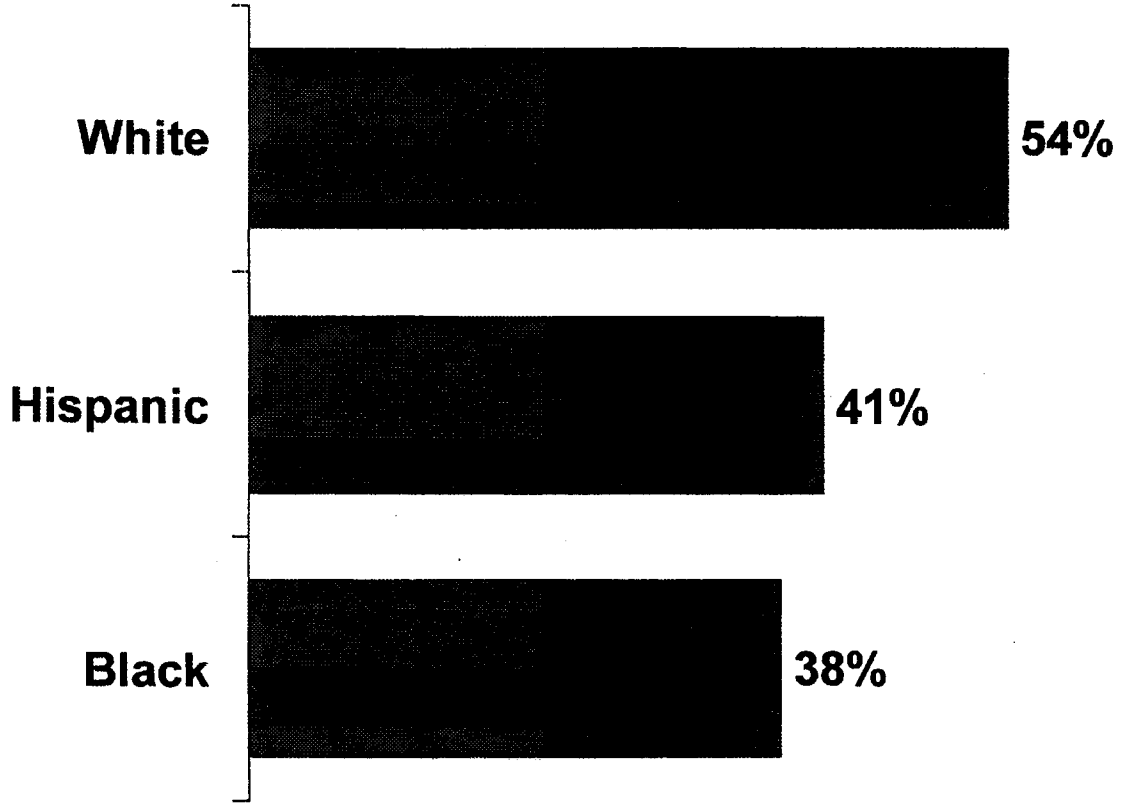
Challenge to Lead

Bachelor's Graduation Rates

Four-Year Colleges and Universities, SREB States, 1996 Cohort



Source: NCHEMS analysis of NCES data.

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Challenge to Lead

Why is achieving gains in degree attainment going to be more challenging than ever?

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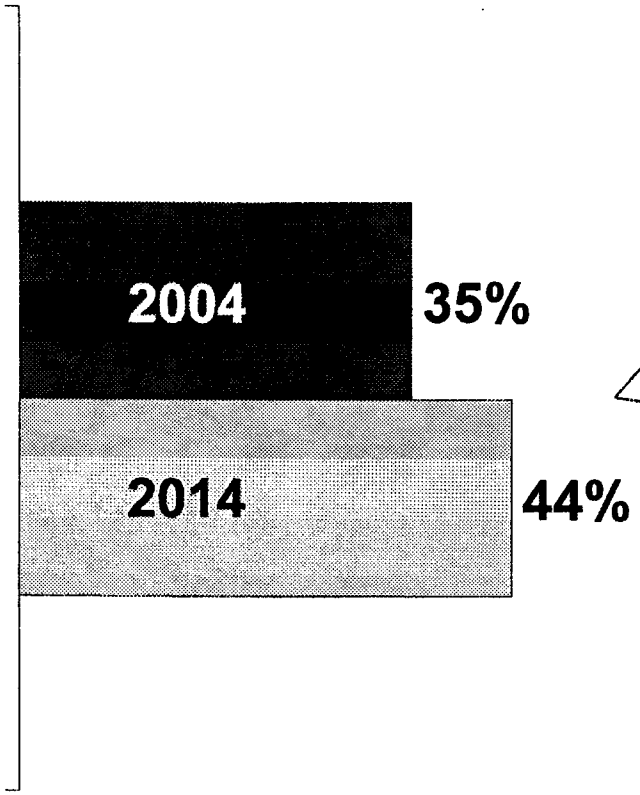
Challenge to Lead

Black and Hispanic Public High School Graduates

SREB States



- 41,800 fewer white graduates
- 12,700 more black graduates;
- 116,400 more Hispanic graduates

Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education, 2005.*

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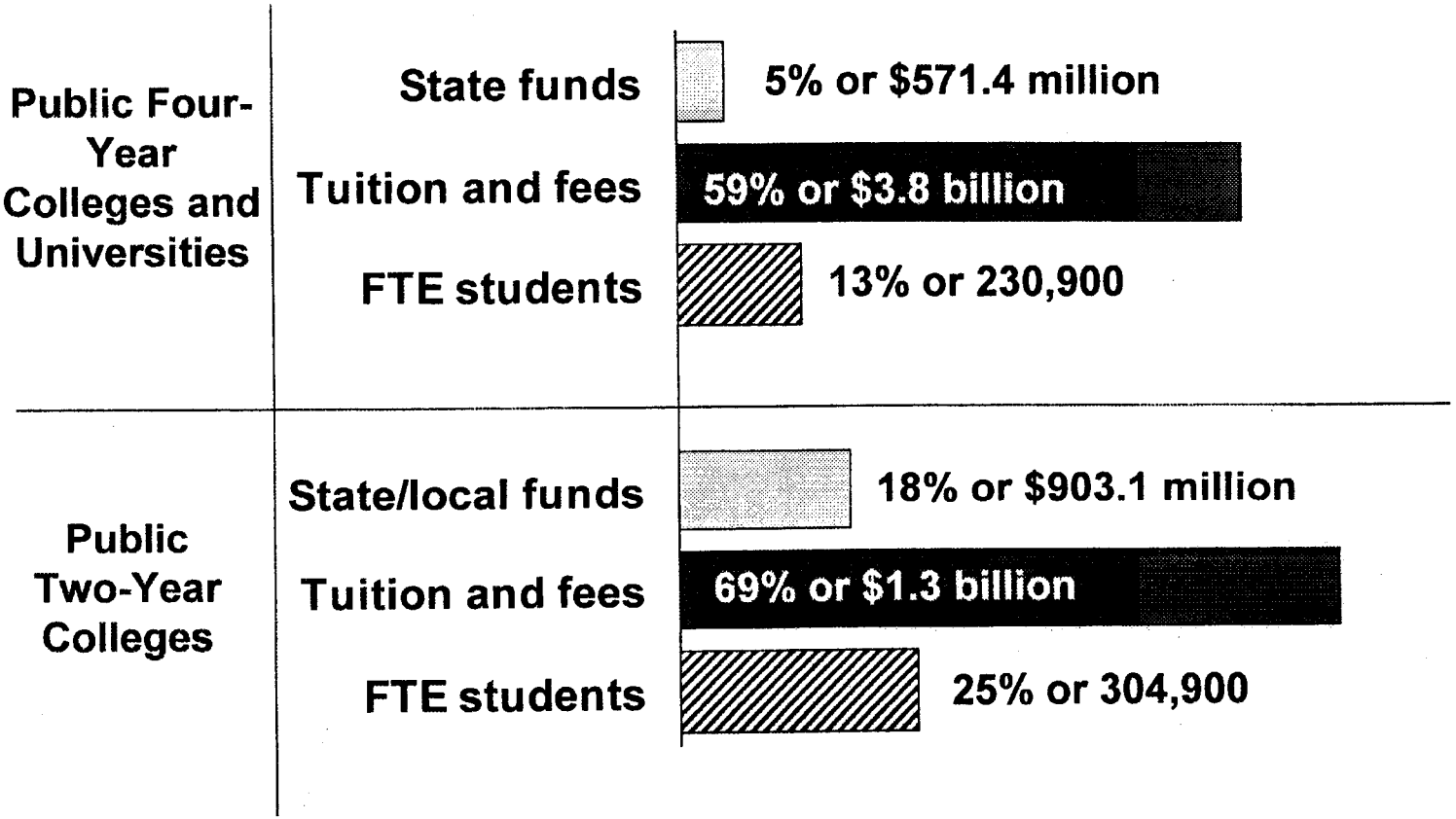
Enrollment, Appropriations and Tuition Revenue Growth

SREB States, 2001 to 2005



Source: SREB-State Data Exchange.

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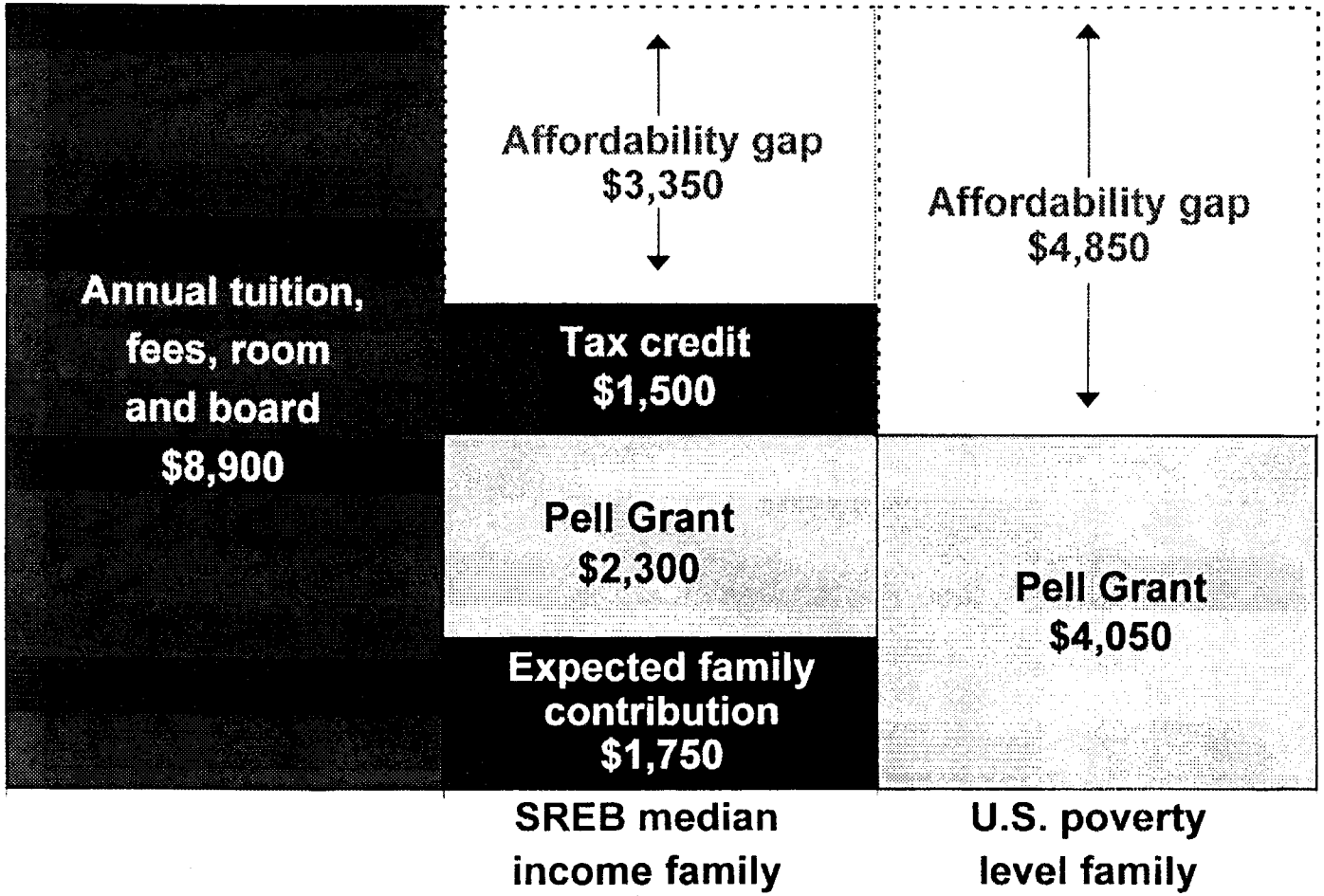
Affordability Gap

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

SREB States, 2004



Source: SREB report, *Creating College Opportunity for All.*

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Challenge to Lead

What do we need to do to get more students to remain in college and get a degree?

Percent of Students Who Remain in College and Graduate[1]

Too Few Students Remain in College to the Sophomore Year; Too Few College Students Graduate

	Four-Year Colleges and Universities		Two-Year Colleges	
	First-Year College Students Who Return Second Year[2] (2003 Cohort)	Graduation Rate[3] (1998 Cohort)	First-Year College Students Who Return Second Year[2] (2003 Cohort)	Graduation Rate[3] (2001 Cohort)
SREB states	77	52	56	18
Alabama	77	50	64	20
Arkansas	68	36	55	24
Delaware	87	65	—	12
Florida	84	58	71	32
Georgia	81	47	70	15
Kentucky	75	45	59	34
Louisiana	71	34	58	6
Maryland	82	63	80	8
Mississippi	77	50	39	—
North Carolina	82	58	—	23
Oklahoma	71	45	60	21
South Carolina	79	58	54	14
Tennessee	73	46	62	11
Texas	72	54	64	12
Virginia	83	65	63	14
West Virginia	72	45	59	16

" — " indicates data not available.

1 These rates are based on the first-time, full-time, bachelor's-seeking students who enrolled in public four-year institutions and on the first-time, full-time, degree- or certificate-seeking students who enrolled in public two-year colleges and technical institutes or colleges in the fall term.

2 The percentage of students who remained enrolled at the institution of first attendance the next fall.

3 The SREB graduation rate for four-year colleges and universities is the percentage of the entering group who, within 150 percent of normal program time (six years for most programs), completed bachelor's degrees. The SREB graduation rate for two-year colleges and technical institutes or colleges is the percentage of the entering class who, within 150 percent of normal program time (three years for most programs), completed degrees or certificates.

Source: SREB-State Data Exchange.

Pre-publication copy

SREB

Getting Students Ready for College and Careers

2006

Southern
Regional
Education
Board

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Atlanta, GA 30318
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www.sreb.org

CHALLENGE TO LEAD SERIES

This report was prepared by Rebecca Daugherty Kaye, research associate, with Joan Lord, director of educational policies, and Gene Bottoms, senior vice president. Alice Presson, special research projects, provided research assistance. Lynn Cornett, senior vice president, guides SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals work.

This report is part of the *Challenge to Lead* education goals series, directed by Joan Lord. For more information, e-mail joan.lord@sreb.org. *Goals for Education: Challenge to Lead* is available on the SREB Web site at www.sreb.org. A full listing of goals, with the indicators for the goal on college readiness, is printed on the inside back cover.

A Message from the President of SREB

Getting Students Ready for College and Careers is an important companion to the SREB report *Getting Serious about High School Graduation.* Together, they make powerful statements to you as policy-makers and education leaders about the problems in high schools and what you can do to fix them.

Getting Serious details the decline in high school graduation rates in most SREB states over the last decade. *Getting Students Ready for College and Careers* goes a step further by describing how many of those who do graduate are not prepared to be successful in college and the workplace. Not only do states need more students to graduate from high school — they also need graduates who are ready for what lies ahead: more advanced learning and high expectations on the job.

More students need to take an essential core of courses to prepare for college and careers.

Teachers, policy-makers and parents have long agreed that those bound for college should take an academically challenging curriculum. However, the latest research shows that the courses once prescribed only for students preparing for college are actually necessary for *all* students: English, mathematics courses up through Algebra II, laboratory-based science, and social studies. *Getting Students Ready for College and Careers* also asserts that this essential core should include a fourth mathematics course to be taken in the senior year and which could be a course beyond Algebra II, a course on data analysis and statistics, or a course specifically focused on preparing students for college-level mathematics.

But students who complete this essential core to prepare them for college and careers may still not be ready.

Research from ACT Inc. suggests that perhaps as many as four in five college freshmen are not ready for college in all of the key subjects. How can this be? Quite simply, states do not have college- and career-readiness standards built into high school curricula, instruction and statewide assessments.

This means that teachers are not always focused on college and career readiness. And it means that courses are not equally challenging from school to school, or even from classroom to classroom. Policy-makers should require *all* high schools and *all* high school teachers to focus intentionally on college and career readiness. Right now in many states, students are lucky if they are assigned a teacher who has the high expectations to push them to high levels of achievement. SREB states can't afford to leave college and career readiness to luck.

Higher education also must shoulder some of the burden to make college and career readiness a top priority for high schools and teachers. Higher education leaders and policy-makers within each state have not agreed on what it means to be ready, so high schools, teachers, parents and students are left without clear messages on what college readiness means.

- Job one is for high school and college faculties in each state to define and agree on these standards. The standards should spell out what it takes — particularly in writing, reading and mathematics — for high school students to succeed in college and careers.

- Then all public colleges statewide should adopt them.
- These standards should then become the basis for your state's high school curriculum and statewide assessments — and students should know by the junior year of high school if they are on track to meet them.
- For students who are not on track, the school should help them become ready during a rigorous and challenging senior year.

Dual enrollment is growing fast and needs more attention from policy-makers.

This report spotlights trends in dual enrollment programs, some of which are disturbing. The five-fold, 10-year increase in high school students across the nation who are taking college-level courses for both high school and college credit shows the rising popularity of the program. Dual enrollment has clearly grown beyond an opportunity for the most accelerated students and now is available to a much more diverse group of students, including those in career and technical programs. While there are likely some benefits of this change, the program needs more oversight from policy-makers.

Too few states have comprehensive policies about who is eligible for dual enrollment and at what standards the "college-level" courses will be taught. The program is being promoted as a potential savings for states and students and as a means to motivate students who might drop out of high school. However, student learning and college success will suffer if dual enrollment students are not ready for college-level courses, if the courses offered are not really college level, or if these courses displace other school-based, high-level English and mathematics courses. *Dual enrollment serves neither the state nor the students if these students are not really prepared to take college-level work.*

It is time to get serious about establishing standards and programs that help all students make a successful transition to college and careers. For your state, it all begins with clarifying specific standards for college and career readiness, through which postsecondary education speaks with one voice and all high school students within a state receive the same signals.

David S. Spence
President

Getting Students Ready for College and Careers

All recent high school graduates have solid academic preparation and are ready for postsecondary education and a career.

SREB *Challenge to Lead* Goal

We all know that when students take rigorous courses in high school, they are better prepared for college and careers. Getting ***all*** high school students to take rigorous courses is, in fact, the best way to ensure that ***all*** students are prepared for college and careers.

But skeptics question whether this amount of preparation is essential for every student. SREB's *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education take on these doubters by asserting that: "Our goal should be nothing less." They urge us to help all students complete high school ready for lifelong learning, including those most likely to drop out.

Getting all high school students to take rigorous courses is the best way to ensure that all students are prepared for college and careers.

Getting students ready begins with offering a core of essential courses — courses ***all*** students need, whether bound for a community college, university or the workplace. Further readiness means adding academic courses or a concentration of career and technical courses. Many students take both.

Student success, however, requires more than offering — or even requiring — these courses.

- Education leaders have to ensure that the courses are rigorous — with clear standards and outcomes for students. Many states use end-of-course and workplace exams to make sure that academic and career/technical courses meet standards and are equally rigorous statewide.
- Teachers have to set high expectations and help students learn to think analytically.
- And, students have to take their work seriously and try to meet their teachers' high expectations as well as state standards.

Policy-makers can determine if high school graduates are prepared by focusing on two additional indicators:

- the percentages of high school students who take and succeed in high-level course work, such as Advanced Placement and high-quality dual enrollment; and
- the percentages of recent high school graduates who meet college-readiness standards, and the percentages who still need to take remedial courses in college.

Most students need four years of high school to get ready for college and careers. School leaders, teachers, students and parents need to re-invent the senior year to give students more of the opportunities they need to prepare. And, as they do so,

they need to work in partnership with colleges and employers so that senior year experiences are directly linked to college freshman expectations and workplace requirements.

If high percentages of students need remedial courses in college, it usually means that high school course content is not sufficiently aligned to college-readiness standards. It could mean that colleges are not speaking with a unified voice about what it takes for students to be ready for college. It could also mean that high school courses are not as rigorous or as focused on key standards as they should be to prepare students for college.

The *Challenge to Lead* goals make it clear that SREB states should increase scores on college admission examinations for all groups of students. And scores are increasing. But gaps continue to widen — largely because white students' scores are improving more than minority students' scores. There are notable exceptions, especially involving Hispanic students. These same gaps are evident in the results of high school end-of-course tests and high school graduation tests.

You will know that your state is making progress in getting students ready for college and careers when you can answer "yes" to these questions:

- Do *all* students in your state complete an essential core of rigorous courses?
  - Do all students in your state complete additional courses to prepare for college and careers?
  - Do students succeed on end-of-course and college admission exams?
- Are achievement gaps closing among groups of students on college admission and end-of-course exams?
- Are students in SREB states exceeding national averages in enrolling in and passing Advanced Placement courses and International Baccalaureate courses? And are enrollments in high-quality dual enrollment programs increasing?
- Are the percentages of recent high school graduates who need remedial courses when entering college approaching zero?

FIRST QUESTIONS:

Do all students in your state complete an essential core of rigorous courses?

Do all students in your state complete additional courses to prepare for college and careers?

Do students succeed on end-of-course and college admission exams?

Challenge to Lead calls for states to set ambitious requirements for high school graduation. The requirements should include:

- courses in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies — a core of courses that has traditionally been prescribed only for those going to college;
- high standards in these — and all — courses; and
- either additional academic courses or a concentration of courses in a career field for every student.

■ Taking the essential core matters

The reality in today's workplace is that all students need a strong core curriculum. It is just as important for those hoping to enter well-paying, high-growth career fields right after high school as it is for those bound for college.

Research by the American Diploma Project has confirmed that ***all*** graduates need "analytic and reasoning skills" — skills that are developed in high-level courses.

ACT Inc. and the College Board have both recommended that students take four years of English and three or four years of mathematics, science and social studies. Both recommend that all students take the essential mathematics core of Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry, and they suggest that students take an additional advanced mathematics course.

SREB's *High Schools That Work* program recommends a core curriculum to prepare career students for well-paying jobs and for postsecondary study. The curriculum parallels the traditional college-prep core advocated by ACT and the College Board, but it strongly recommends a fourth year of mathematics. The fourth mathematics course should be one that is more advanced than Algebra II, a course such as statistics and data analysis, or one designed to prepare seniors for college mathematics. *HSTW* points to the fourth course as an important bridge to college and careers. Taking this type of course means not only that students won't lose mathematics skills in the senior year, but that they also will have opportunities to strengthen them.

High school graduation requirements in most SREB states already include the same number of courses in English, social studies and science as these recommendations. They also include at least three years of mathematics. (See Appendix.)

But only a few SREB states specify that all students take Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry. While some states require students on college-preparatory diploma pathways to take most of the recommended courses, many have set requirements on other diploma pathways that allow students to graduate without geometry and Algebra II. (See Table 1.)

North Carolina is a good example. It requires students to complete three mathematics courses, regardless of their diploma paths. Students seeking the career-prep diploma must take Algebra I. Students seeking the college tech-prep or college/university-prep diplomas must begin their mathematics sequence with Algebra I and go on to take geometry and Algebra II. Starting with ninth-graders in 2002, students must complete four mathematics courses to earn the college/university-prep diploma, but this requirement does not apply to those in the college tech-prep or career-prep paths.

While a few SREB states require four mathematics courses for ***all*** students, only Virginia requires the Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry for ***all*** students. Six SREB states do require these courses for their college-prep students. Only two of the five SREB states with career/technical diploma paths require or plan to require more advanced mathematics than Algebra I for students seeking these diplomas.

The ***essential core*** for all students includes:

- four years of English;
- four years of mathematics: Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry; plus: one course beyond Algebra II, a course such as statistics and data analysis, or one designed to prepare seniors for college mathematics;
- three years of science; and
- three years of social studies.

Table 1

Mathematics Courses Required for High School Graduation in SREB States

Diploma				Mathematics Requirements (Least Advanced → Most Advanced)			
		Number of Courses Required	Number of Courses Required After Algebra I	Includes Algebra I	Includes Algebra I and Geometry	Begins with Algebra I	Includes Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II
	Recommended Core[1]	4	2+	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alabama	Standard	4	1	✓	✓		
	Advanced Academic	4	2	✓	✓		✓
Arkansas	College-Prep	3	2	✓	✓	✓[2]	
Delaware	Standard	3	0				
Florida	Standard	3	0	✓			
	Career-Prep (3-year)	3	0	✓			
	College-Prep (3-year)	3	2	✓	✓	✓	
Georgia	Technology/Career-Prep	3	0	✓			
	College-Prep	4	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kentucky	Standard	3	1	✓	✓		
Louisiana	Standard	3	1	✓	✓[3]		
Maryland	Standard	3	1	✓	✓		
Mississippi	Standard	3[4]	1	✓	✓[5]		
North Carolina	Career-Prep	3	0	✓			
	College Tech-Prep	3	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
	College/University-Prep	3[6]	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oklahoma	Standard	3	2	✓	✓	✓	
South Carolina	Tech-Prep	4	2	✓	✓	✓	
	College-Prep	4	2	✓	✓	✓	
Tennessee	Tech-Prep	3	0	✓[7]			
	University-Prep	3	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Texas	Minimum[8]	3	1	✓	✓		
	Recommended	3	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Distinguished	3	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
Virginia	Standard	3	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Advanced	4	3	✓	✓	✓	✓
West Virginia	Standard	3[9]	1	✓	✓[10]		

Note: Equivalent courses may stand in for those listed in some states. For example, in Louisiana, Integrated Math I and II are equivalent to Algebra I.

[1] ACT, the College Board and *High Schools that Work* recommend similar mathematics requirements. They advocate that all students take Algebra I, geometry and Algebra II and suggest that students take at least one course beyond Algebra II.

[2] Arkansas requires Algebra I and geometry, plus one higher-level course.

[3] Louisiana's curriculum specifies that a limit of two mathematics courses considered "entry level" may be applied toward the diploma. Examples include Algebra I, Integrated Math I and Applied Math I.

[4] Mississippi requires one additional unit of mathematics (for a total of four), beginning with ninth-graders entering in Fall 2005. Pre-algebra and Algebra I taken in the eighth grade may apply toward this additional requirement.

[5] Mississippi's curriculum requires Algebra I, plus at least one higher-level course.

[6] Beginning in Fall 2002, ninth-graders must complete four units of mathematics. The additional unit must be beyond Algebra II.

[7] Beginning with ninth-graders entering in Fall 2004, Tennessee requires three units of mathematics, including Algebra I and one higher-level course.

[8] A student must have written consent from a counselor and a parent in order to graduate using Texas' Minimum High School Program requirements.

[9] Beginning with ninth-graders entering in Fall 2006, West Virginia will require four units of mathematics.

[10] West Virginia requires Algebra I, plus one higher-level course.

Sources: State departments of education; compiled by SREB staff, 2005.

■ Taking the essential core increases achievement

Students who take the core hold the advantage on both the ACT and SAT tests in every SREB state.

ACT reports average scores by state for seniors who completed the minimum, 13-course recommended core. In 2005 in ACT-dominant SREB states, 58 percent of those who took the test reported that they took the ACT-recommended core. The state with the highest percentage taking the core was Louisiana at 71 percent. (See Table 2.)

Students who take the core hold the advantage on both the ACT and SAT tests in every SREB state.

Table 2

Scores are Higher for Seniors Who Took a College Admission Exam and Completed the Recommended Core Curriculum, 2005

	Percent Taking the Exam	Percent Taking the Exam and Completing Core[1]	Average Scores		Difference in Score: Completed Core vs. Did Not Complete
			Those Who Completed Core	Those Who Did Not Complete Core	
ACT-Dominant States					
United States	40	56	21.9	19.5	2.4
Alabama	77	64	21.0	18.4	2.6
Arkansas	76	70	21.1	17.7	3.4
Kentucky	76	60	21.1	19.1	2.0
Louisiana	85	71	20.5	17.6	2.9
Mississippi	94	51	20.0	17.2	2.8
Oklahoma	69	56	21.6	18.8	2.8
Tennessee	92	61	21.2	19.1	2.1
West Virginia	65	28[2]	21.8	19.9	1.9
SAT-Dominant States					
United States	49	76	1068	925	143
Delaware	74	74	1049	916	133
Florida	65	70	1042	906	136
Georgia	75	71	1039	906	133
Maryland	71	78	1074	902	172
North Carolina	74	69	1055	929	126
South Carolina	64	74	1027	913	114
Texas	54	75	1037	891	146
Virginia	73	86	1062	893	169

[1] The ACT core is defined as four years of English and three years each of mathematics, science and social studies. The SAT does not report scores of students who completed its recommended curriculum; the percentages and scores reported here are for students who completed 18 or more units of academic work.

[2] West Virginia's ninth- and 10th-graders take integrated science courses. Many students fail to report those courses as college-preparatory, although they meet the state's college-prep requirements. West Virginia's score profile therefore underreports students who complete a college-prep curriculum.

Sources: ACT Inc. and the College Board.

The College Board also reports the percentage of students who completed a core of 18 or more academic courses. In 2005 in SAT-dominant SREB states, 74 percent of those who took the test reported that they took the core. The state with the highest percentage of students taking the core was Virginia at 86 percent.

Nationwide, students who took the core scored higher than students who did not: 2.4 points on the ACT and 143 points on the SAT. In ACT-dominant SREB states, average scores for these students were higher by 1.9 to 3.4 points, and in SAT-dominant SREB states, by 114 to 172 points.

Research conducted by *High Schools That Work* shows the same pattern for the more than 40,000 seniors who took the biennial *HSTW* assessment in 2004. Students who completed the English, mathematics and science components of the *HSTW*-recommended core scored higher than students who did not. Those who completed the courses in English (comprising courses with significant reading and writing components) scored 15 points higher on reading achievement than students who did not. Those who completed the mathematics courses scored 24 points higher, and those who completed the science courses scored 20 points higher. (See Table 3.)

■ Rigor within courses is essential, too

It is not enough to increase the number of courses that students must take or even to specify the course titles. To be most effective, courses should be aligned with college- and career-readiness standards. But until recently, there was little consensus about how high the standards should be set for the essential core. Higher education and K-12 leaders in most states have not defined jointly what it really means for students to be ready for college and careers and have not communicated this clearly to teachers, students and parents. Defining and communicating these standards is just the first step. Education leaders should use these standards as both the foundation of the high school curriculum and the beginning point of the college curriculum, and they should assess whether students meet these standards.

Higher education and K-12 leaders in most states have not defined jointly what it really means for students to be ready for college and careers.

Table 3

Percent and Average Scores of Seniors Taking the *HSTW* Assessment Who Completed the *HSTW*-Recommended Core Curriculum, 2004

Percent		Average Scores					
		Reading		Mathematics		Science	
Core	Less than Core	Core	Less than Core	Core	Less than Core	Core	Less than Core
22	78	291	271	315	292	308	283

HSTW Performance Goal: Reading, 279; Mathematics, 297; Science, 299. Math and science goals are aligned with the NAEP Basic level, and the reading goal approaches the NAEP Proficient level.

Note: Approximately 80 percent of students taking the assessment completed at least one sequence of career/technical courses, and 20 percent were drawn from the overall student population. The assessment was referenced to the National Assessment of Educational Progress and reports scores on a scale of 0 to 500.

Source: *HSTW* Assessment.

Many SREB states already use end-of-course exams to measure achievement on state course standards and to ensure that high school courses are equally rigorous statewide. Some of these exams could also measure college and career readiness. (See Box 1.)

Box 1

End-of-Course Exams Can Help Improve Course Rigor

One strategy that many SREB states use to promote instructional rigor in key courses is end-of-course exams. These statewide, standardized final exams are tied to state standards, and exams in courses such as Algebra II and English could be tied to a state's college-readiness standards once they are defined.

End-of course exams are administered to students as they complete key courses like Algebra I, biology or American history. Ten SREB states — Arkansas, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia — use this type of exam in some or all essential core courses.

End-of-course exams are used as a part of school accountability systems in nine SREB states — to assess the effectiveness of schools. But in some states, they are also used in course grading, and in some they even affect high school graduation. In most of the states, the result counts as part of the student's grade or is reported on the student's transcript.

Why is this important? Students are more motivated to score well if the exams affect them directly. Scores tend to be higher when students have more at stake. But these distinctions do not account for all of the differences in pass rates. Each state has its own standards for these courses and designs its own exams — or in some cases, adopts existing ones.

Six SREB states — Arkansas, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia — have tested Algebra I students long enough to see a trend. Scores have increased overall in each of these states. This trend is important because Algebra I is the basis for higher-level mathematics and science courses.

Pass Rates on End-of-Course Exams in Participating SREB States, 2001 to 2004

	Effect on Students	Algebra I			
		2001	2002	2003	2004
Arkansas	None	20%	37%	44%	53%
Georgia	Factored into course grades	—	—	—	60
Maryland	Reported on student transcripts	—	52	53	59
Mississippi	Required for graduation	—	79	82	91
North Carolina	Factored into course grades	76	79	79	80
Oklahoma	Reported on student transcripts	—	—	22	30
South Carolina	Factored into course grades	—	—	—	79
Tennessee	Required for graduation	—	77	75	81
Virginia	Required for graduation	74	78	78	80

Sources: State departments of education; compiled by SREB, 2005.

National efforts to define college readiness

The American Diploma Project and *High Schools That Work:* Both have documented problems in sufficient instructional rigor to ensure readiness. The American Diploma Project concluded that few "states have effective mechanisms for ensuring that [high school] course content reflects the knowledge and skills required for success in college and work."

High Schools That Work has found repeatedly that courses with the same title are not the same from high school to high school, or even classroom to classroom. They differ in how often teachers require students to think analytically, how challenging assignments are, and how high teacher expectations are for student work.

In 2001, the American Diploma Project invited five states, including Kentucky and Texas, to help determine the appropriate level of rigor for key high school courses and to provide guidance to teachers for achieving it.

Thus far, the project has developed course benchmarks and guidance for English and mathematics. Eleven SREB states — Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, North Carolina and Texas — have committed to aligning their high school standards with American Diploma Project benchmarks, curriculum and assessments. (See Box 2.)

21st Century Skills: In recent years, a number of organizations identified gaps between the knowledge and skills required in the modern workplace and what most students learn in school. These organizations formed a partnership to define and promote "21st century skills." Many of these skills are similar to those identified as critical by the American Diploma Project, such as problem solving, critical thinking and research in core subjects.

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills is focused on promoting the development of these skills in conjunction with information and communication technology skills — both as an *integral part* of all courses. It advocates that students should learn to use tools such as computers, the Internet and audio/video technologies to access, manage, integrate and evaluate information; draw conclusions; and communicate effectively. A variety of software technology tools can help students develop these skills in core courses and deepen learning through word-processing programs, Internet search engines, e-mail, spreadsheets, time and project management software, and online courses. All are fundamental to the 21st-century workplace, but not yet in place in most of the lessons, assignments and assessments used in schools.

Box 2

Sample Benchmarks for English and Mathematics Courses Developed by the American Diploma Project

English Benchmark Strands

Language, Communication, Writing, Research, Logic, Informational Text, Media and Literature

For example, specific reading lists were developed to define the quality and complexity of reading expected of all high school graduates.

Mathematics Benchmark Strands

Number Sense and Numerical Operations; Algebra; Geometry; Data Interpretation, Statistics and Probability

For example, sample problems were embedded within the benchmarks themselves to illustrate the quality and complexity of the corresponding mathematics benchmark.

■ Requiring the essential core is not enough

ACT's recent report, *Crisis at the Core,* underscores the point that taking the essential core courses is important, but the report also shows that taking the essential core does not necessarily ensure college success. To identify other benchmarks of college readiness, ACT researchers studied the relationship between scores on the four ACT subtests (English, mathematics, science and reading) and grades earned in college. They defined readiness as having a 75 percent chance of earning a grade of C or better and a 50 percent chance of earning a grade of A or B in two- and four-year colleges.

The analysis revealed a clear correlation between the score on each subtest and later success in a related college course. It identified a college-readiness benchmark in English as a subscore of 18; in mathematics, as a subscore of 22; in science, as a subscore of 24; and in social studies, as a score of 21 on the reading subtest.

Only 22 percent of all students tested on the ACT in 2004 met the English, mathematics and science benchmark scores. While 68 percent met the benchmark in English, only 40 percent met it in mathematics, and 26 percent in science. In 2005, these scores remained stable, and 51 percent of students met the benchmark in reading established that year. (See Table 4.)

These statistics create a valuable predictor of college readiness for ACT-dominant SREB states. More important, they reveal that the actual gap in college readiness for all recent high school graduates is much larger than previously thought. The gap goes beyond the one in four students who historically need remedial courses when they enter college. As many as four in five college freshmen may not be ready to be successful in college, especially in science.

ACT research went further to study whether other courses, such as high school calculus or physics, improved students' chances for success in college. The research showed that subscores improved in all four areas for students who took higher-level courses.

Four in five college freshmen may not be ready for college.

Students who took four years of mathematics, starting with Algebra I, scored higher than those who took three years. Those who took trigonometry achieved the math benchmark of 22. Those who took calculus exceeded it by nearly 3 points. The results were similar for students who took advanced science courses, although even those who took physics fell about 2 points short of reaching the science benchmark of 24.

Table 4

ACT Benchmarks for Readiness, 2004

ACT Subject-Area Tests	Benchmark Scores on Subject-Area Tests[1]	College Course	Percent Meeting Benchmark
English	18	English	68
Mathematics	22	College Algebra	40
Science	24	Biology	26
Reading	21	Social Studies	51[2]

[1] Score that indicates a student has a 75 percent chance of earning a grade of C or better and a 50 percent chance of earning a grade of B or better in the related college course.

[2] Reading/social studies data are from 2005.

Source: ACT Inc.

Table 5

College-Prep Curriculum Requirements Beyond the Core in SREB States

	State's College-Prep High School Diploma (or Standard Diploma in States Without a College-Prep Diploma)	Selected Additional Units Required			Fourth Unit	
		Speech	Foreign Language	Fine Arts	Social Studies	Science
Alabama	Advanced Academic		2	0.5	✓	✓
Arkansas	College-Prep	0.5		0.5		
Delaware	Standard					
Florida	College-Prep		2			
Georgia	College-Prep		2	1[2]		
	College-Prep with Distinction[1]		2	1[2]		
Kentucky	Standard			1		
Louisiana	Standard					
Maryland	Standard		2[3]	1		
Mississippi	Standard			1		
North Carolina	College/University-Prep		2			
Oklahoma	Standard			2		
South Carolina	College-Prep		1			
Tennessee	University-Prep		2	1		
Texas	Distinguished	0.5	3	1	✓	
Virginia	Advanced Studies		3	1	✓	✓
West Virginia	Standard[4]			1		

"Speech" includes public-speaking courses.

[1] Students must also complete two additional core academic units.

[2] Students must complete one unit of arts, technology or foreign language.

[3] Students must complete two units in foreign language or advanced technology.

[4] Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, students must complete four units of social studies. Academically advanced students must complete a professional pathway comprising one additional unit of mathematics beyond Algebra I, one of science, and two in the same foreign language.

Sources: State departments of education; compiled by SREB staff, 2005.

ACT concluded that the essential core is no longer a "ticket to success in college," and it recommends that students take more — and higher-level — courses in high school.

In fact, some SREB states do require courses beyond the essential core for students preparing for postsecondary programs. (See Table 5.)

- Three SREB states — Alabama, Texas and Virginia — require at least four additional academic courses in fine arts, foreign language, social studies and science for students seeking a college-preparatory diploma.
- Nine SREB states specify that students earning their most advanced diploma must take foreign language courses.

All students need courses beyond the core

Challenge to Lead makes it clear that all students — not just those seeking college-prep diplomas — need courses beyond the core in order to be ready for college and careers. Students need to complete courses in a broad career field or take additional academic courses. States that have adopted a default curriculum

should ensure that students who opt out are required to complete a career concentration in addition to the minimum high school graduation requirements.

Half of SREB states require career courses for high school students beyond the core. These states have, in effect, eliminated the "general track" that permitted students to graduate from high school without being prepared for either college or careers.

Four states — Arkansas, Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia — require all students to complete a concentration of courses in a career field. Students can choose courses in both career and academic subjects for their concentration, depending on their plans. These states offer a single diploma pathway for all students, but they build flexibility into their requirements to meet the needs of those going to college, technical programs or work right from high school. Four other SREB states — Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee — require career/technical students to take at least three career-preparatory courses. (See Table 6.)

In fact, the five SREB states that eliminated the "general track" in the mid-1990s made the greatest gains on college admission tests between 1996 and 2005.

States should go further to promote rigorous instruction in both academic course and career/technical courses. State leaders in Kentucky believe that rigorous career/technical courses — ones that integrate academic skills and industry-developed end-of-program exams — have improved the academic achievement of career/technical students. Since the courses were redesigned, Kentucky's career/technical students have improved more than other students on the state accountability test. (See Figure 1.)

Table 6

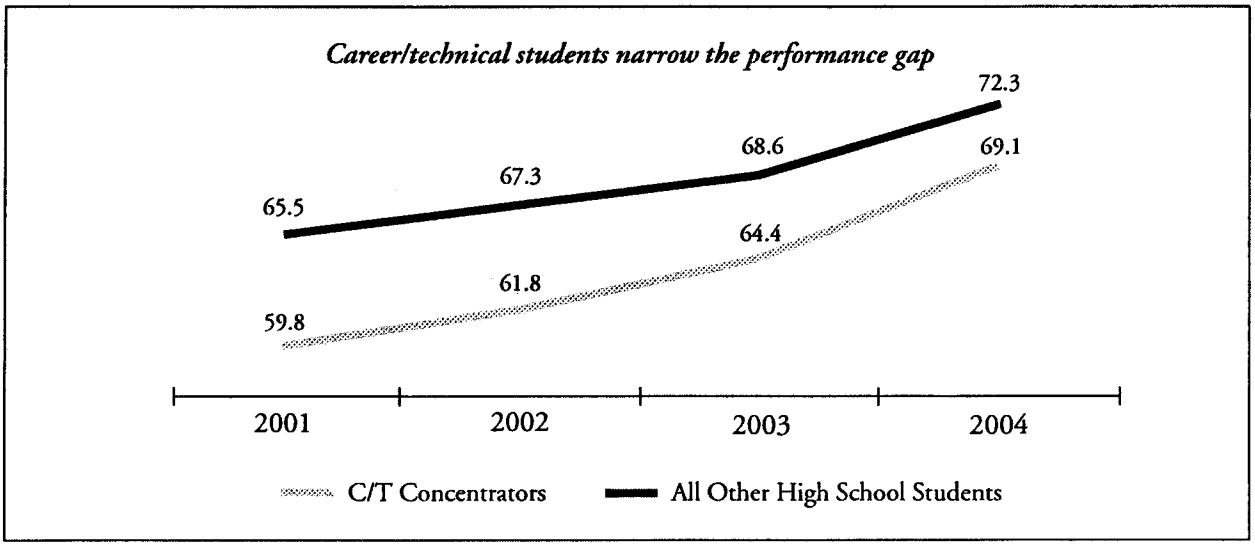
Career Requirements Beyond the Core in SREB States

	State's Career-Oriented High School Diploma (or Standard Diploma in States Without a Career-Oriented Diploma)	Career Units Required
Alabama	Standard	0
Arkansas	College-Prep	6
Delaware	Diploma	3
Florida	Career-Prep	3 in one program or 5 in more than one
Georgia	Technology/Career-Prep	4
Kentucky	Standard	0
Louisiana	Standard	0
Maryland	Standard	4
Mississippi	Standard	0
North Carolina	Career- and College Tech-Prep	4
Oklahoma	Standard	0
South Carolina	Tech-Prep	1
Tennessee	Tech-Prep	4
Texas	Recommended	0
Virginia	Standard	0
West Virginia	Standard	4

Sources: State departments of education; compiled by SREB staff, 2005.

Figure 1

Kentucky's High School Students Who Took a Career/Technical Concentration, Compared With Other High School Students, 2001 to 2004



Note: The academic index is a composite of seven subtests of Kentucky's Commonwealth Accountability Testing System: reading, writing, social studies, mathematics, science, arts and humanities, and practical living/vocational studies.

Source: Kentucky Department of Education.

Few states evaluate students' knowledge in courses beyond the core. Virginia, however, uses end-of-course exams for all courses. Virginia developed some exams and also adopted existing ones, including Advanced Placement and industry certification exams.

Other SREB states, including Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma and West Virginia, use end-of-course exams in career/technical courses or when students complete career concentrations.

■ SREB students are making progress on college admission tests

Students in nearly every SREB state scored higher on college admission tests in 2005 than in 1995. During that time, many SREB states increased the number of academic courses that students must take to graduate, likely contributing to score gains.

Students' scores in six of eight ACT-dominant SREB states went up faster than the national average over the period. Scores improved in seven of eight SAT-dominant states, with five above the U.S. average score increase. ACT scores for students nationally did not go up, but SAT scores rose nationally by 15 points.

No ACT-dominant SREB state topped the national average on the ACT in 2005. Only Virginia among SAT-dominant SREB states scored above the U.S. average. Maryland students fell just 2 points short.

Even though only one SREB state reached the national average, scores in 13 SREB states gained on it. Gains on the ACT in ACT-dominant states ranged from 0.1 point to 0.6 point. Gains on the SAT in SAT-dominant SREB states ranged from 2 points to 39 points.

The score increases are noteworthy because larger percentages of seniors took the exams in nearly all SREB states. Typically, scores drop when larger percentages of students take the tests. Growth in the percentages of seniors taking the test ranged from 3 percentage points to 20 percentage points. (See Table 7.)

Table 7

College Admission Exam Scores, 1996 and 2005
Average ACT and SAT Scores Increase for Most SREB States

	Percent Tested on Dominant Exam		Average Scores		Change in Scores, 1996 to 2005
	1996	2005	1996	2005	
ACT-Dominant States					
United States	37	40	20.9	20.9	0.0
Alabama	65	77	20.1	20.2	**0.1**
Arkansas	65	76	20.2	20.3	**0.1**
Kentucky	66	76	20.1	20.4	**0.3**
Louisiana	70	85	19.4	19.8	**0.4**
Mississippi	74	94	18.8	18.7	-0.1
Oklahoma	66	69	20.5	20.4	-0.1
Tennessee	75	92	19.9	20.5	**0.6**
West Virginia	56	65	20.0	20.4	**0.4**
SAT-Dominant States					
United States	43	49	1013	1028	15
Delaware	68	74	1003	1005	2
Florida	51	65	994	996	2
Georgia	69	75	961	993	**32**
Maryland	64	71	1011	1026	15
North Carolina	62	74	976	1010	**34**
South Carolina	64	64	954	993	**39**
Texas	48	54	995	995	0
Virginia	67	73	1003	1030	27

Percentages in bold exceeded the national average score change.

Sources: ACT Inc. and the College Board.

What can you and your state do to ensure that all students complete the courses they need in high school and succeed on end-of-course and college admission exams?

- Require the essential core courses for all high school students — including Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry, plus an additional mathematics course in the senior year. Restrict other options.
- Require that all students take additional academic courses or a series of courses in a career field.
- Adopt college- and career-readiness benchmarks such as those described by the American Diploma Project and align course standards and assessments to them.
- Use end-of-course exams — including industry-developed certification exams — to promote the rigor of all high school courses.

SECOND QUESTION:

Are achievement gaps closing among groups of students on college admission and end-of-course exams?

Achievement gaps persist in spite of efforts to close them. The good news is that achievement on end-of-course exams and college admission tests generally is improving. But not at the same pace for all groups. And not fast enough for the students who need to make the most improvement.

■ Gaps in scores on college admission tests among racial/ethnic groups are growing

Students in all racial/ethnic groups — including white students — need to improve their college admission test scores. This improvement is especially critical for minority students, whose scores lag behind those of white students. In 2005, the average SAT score for white students in SREB states was 1062; for black students, 860; and for Hispanic students, 911. The average ACT score in 2005 for white students in the region was 21.3; for black students, 16.8; and for Hispanic students,18.2.

Achievement gaps persist in spite of efforts to close them.

Scores for black students in SREB states and in the nation are improving slower than the scores of white students, both on the ACT and on the SAT. Hispanic students' scores, in contrast, are not improving. The average SAT score for white students in SREB states increased by 20 points between 1996 and 2005; for black students, scores improved by 11 points; and for Hispanic students, scores declined by 6 points. The average ACT score for white students in SREB states improved by 0.3 point; for black students, scores remained constant; and Hispanic students' scores dropped 0.2 point.

- The difference in average ACT scores between white and black students in SREB states in 2005 was 4.6 points on the test's 36-point scale, up from 4.2 points in 1996.
- The difference between the ACT scores of white and Hispanic students in 2005 was 3.2 points, up from 2.5 points in 1996.
- The difference in average SAT scores between white and black students in 2005 was 202 on the test's scale of 400 to 1600 points, up from 193 points in 1996.
- The difference between the SAT scores of white and Hispanic students in 2005 was 151 points, up from 125 points in 1996.

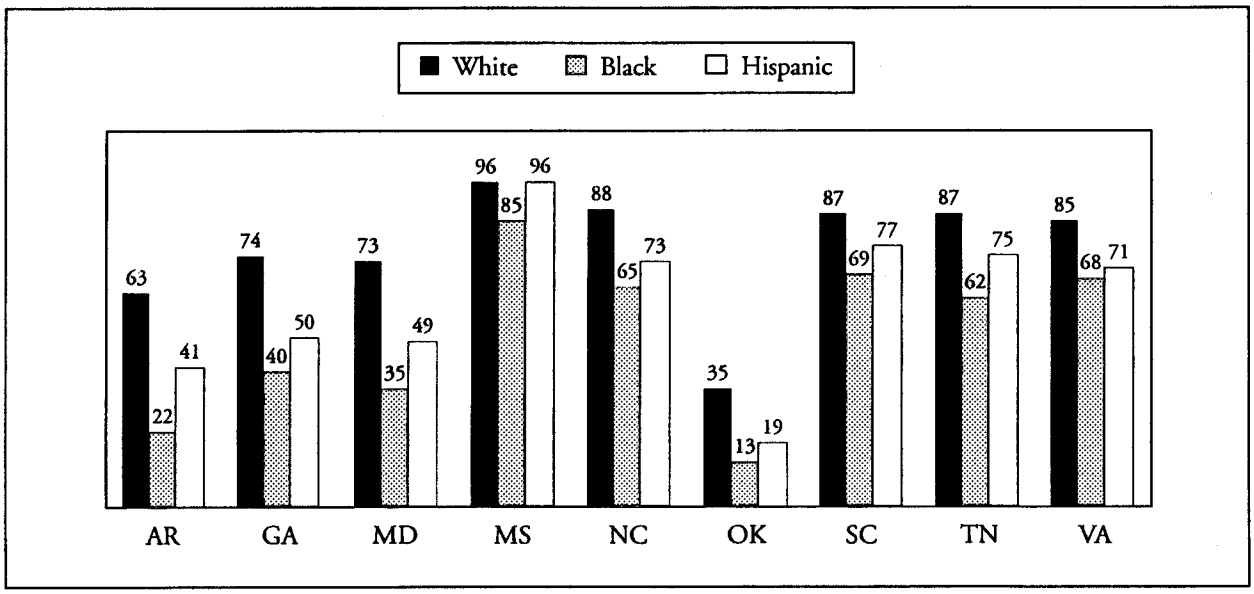
■ The pattern of achievement is the same for end-of-course exams

Achievement gaps between student performance and state standards — as measured by end-of-course exams — mirror those on college admission tests for all racial/ethnic groups. Too many students in all groups are not passing these tests, and minority students lag behind the performance of white students.

For further details about the gaps in SAT and ACT scores in SREB states, see the upcoming companion to this report, *Achievement Gaps on College Admission Tests,* which will be available at www.sreb.org.

Figure 2

Percentages of Groups of Students Passing Algebra I End-of-Course Exams, 2004



Source: State departments of education.

For instance, in 2004, nine SREB states administered end-of-course exams in Algebra I. In these states, white students generally passed the tests at higher percentages than black or Hispanic students. Only in Mississippi, a state with a small Hispanic population, did Hispanic students equal the pass rate of white students. The difference in the performances of white and Hispanic students in the other eight states ranged from 12 percentage points to 24 percentage points. The difference in the performances of white and black students ranged from 11 to 41 percentage points. (See Figure 2.)

■ Demographic changes increase the challenge to meet state standards

The performance of all groups of students is improving on state assessments, but demographic changes in some SREB states will make getting more minority students to meet state standards even more urgent. Students from minority racial/ethnic groups are an increasing proportion of those who take state tests, yet they historically score lower than white students.

Some of these demographic changes are dramatic. SREB's *Fact Book on Higher Education 2005* calls the growth of Hispanic students "the overriding demographic trend." By 2018, it reports, Hispanic students will represent 29 percent of public high school graduates, up from 12 percent in 2002. White students will decrease to 45 percent, compared with 62 percent in 2002.

Demographic Changes in Texas

Percent of seniors taking the SAT

	1996	2005
Asian	5%	6%
Black	11	12
Hispanic	16	19
White	58	52

Source: The College Board.

By 2018, 49 percent of high school graduates in SREB states will be black or Hispanic. These changes are already noticeable among the students who take college admission tests. The proportion of black students taking the dominant test in four SREB states — Alabama, Delaware, Louisiana and Mississippi — grew by at least 3 percentage points from 1996 to 2005. In all but one state, the proportion of Hispanic students taking the dominant college admission test increased. Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas experienced the greatest increases.

These changes in proportion signal the need for more state focus on the performance of minority students. The groups of students who are growing are the very groups that are falling behind. States should do all they can to improve the performance of students from these groups, close achievement gaps and raise average state test scores. Key strategies that states should consider include requiring the essential core curriculum for all students and emphasizing college- and career-readiness standards in all courses. *High Schools That Work* research suggests that minority students who take rigorous essential core courses — and receive academic support to help them succeed — perform on a level similar to that of white students.

What can you and your state do to close achievement gaps?

Closing gaps is one of three key themes of the *Challenge to Lead* goals. Nearly every report in the *Challenge to Lead* series addresses progress SREB states have made and suggestions for closing the gaps. Efforts must begin as early as preschool and continue at every educational level. These reports suggest that states should do the following:

- Hold schools accountable for the performance of all groups of students and make closing achievement gaps a priority in accountability systems.
- Conduct research to determine if all groups of students have access to rigorous courses with challenging assignments and ensure that these courses are available to all students.
- Include information on all groups of students in all reports on student performance so that resources can be directed to those who are behind.
- Provide support for or restructure low-performing schools, especially those with large minority populations.
- Give students the help they need to improve, including tutoring, summer programs, guidance and career counseling, and flexible and alternate scheduling that permits them to focus on key subjects.
- Assign high-quality teachers to low-performing schools.

THIRD QUESTION:

Are high school students in your state taking and succeeding in higher-level courses?

The *Challenge to Lead* goals single out Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and dual enrollment courses as effective ways for students to take high-level courses and prepare for college and careers. Recent studies report that students who take courses like these are more successful in college — even those who do not score well enough to receive college credit.

Challenge to Lead calls for students to enroll and pass AP and IB courses at rates that exceed national averages. It also calls for dual enrollment programs to grow. Some SREB states lead the nation on this indicator. In all SREB states, more students than ever are taking and succeeding in these courses.

■ SREB states perform well in Advanced Placement programs

In 2004, six SREB states exceeded the national average in the percentage of graduates who took at least one AP exam. Four of these — Florida, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia — were in the top 10 nationally in the percentage of graduates who had taken at least one AP exam. (See Table 8.)

Table 8

Percent of Graduating Seniors Who Took and Passed[1] at Least One AP Exam, 2004

	Percent Who Took at Least One AP Exam	Percent Who Scored 3 or Higher on at Least One AP Exam
United States	21	13
SREB median	18	10
Alabama	9	5
Arkansas	13	6
Delaware	20	11
Florida	34	20
Georgia	22	12
Kentucky	16	8
Louisiana	5	3
Maryland	29	19
Mississippi	7	3
North Carolina	27	16
Oklahoma	17	8
South Carolina	19	11
Tennessee	14	8
Texas	23	13
Virginia	28	18
West Virginia	13	6

Percentages in bold met or exceeded the national average. "SREB median" is the average of the two SREB median states.

[1] Most colleges award credit to students who score 3 or higher on an AP exam.

Source: The College Board.

All SREB states — and, in fact, all states — showed increases in the percentage of graduating students who took AP exams from 2000 to 2004. The median increase in SREB states was 6 percent; state increases ranged from 1 percent to 11 percent.

Most colleges give credit to students who earn a score of 3 or higher on AP exams (considered "passing"). In 2004, five SREB states met or exceeded the national average in the percentage of graduating students who passed an AP exam. Four states — Florida, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia — were in the top 10 nationally in the percentage of graduates who passed at least one exam.

All SREB states also had increases in the percentage of high school graduates who passed at least one AP exam. The SREB median increase was 3 percent, and individual state increases ranged from 1 percent to nearly 6 percent.

SREB states need to improve the participation of black students in AP programs, however. In all SREB states, black students were significantly underrepresented among students who took AP exams in 2004. In fact, black students' underrepresentation was greater in SREB states than in the nation. Black students made up 10 percent of all students who took the exams in SREB states, although 25 percent of the school population was black. Nationally, 6 percent of students who took the AP exams were black, compared with 13 percent in the school population. In most SREB states, the percentage of Hispanic students in the school population was about the same as the percentage taking AP exams.

■ International Baccalaureate programs grow

SREB states lead the nation in offering another type of advanced course work: the IB program. The IB program is a comprehensive, two-year curriculum that includes six academic areas: language, second language, individuals and societies, experimental sciences, mathematics and computer science, and the arts — as well as community service and an independent project. Students take subject exams and may receive an IB diploma if they score well on tests in each area. Students who do not earn IB diplomas may still receive college credit for individual IB courses.

Most colleges give credit to students who earn a score of 4 or higher on IB exams (considered "passing"). Unlike state and national AP data, which report percentages of success on the basis of *all graduates,* IB data report the percentages who pass on the basis of *all exams* taken. Five SREB states surpassed the national average in the percentages of IB exams taken that scored 4 or above. In the SREB region as a whole, the percentage that passed was 75, compared with 79 in the nation. (See Table 9.)

Table 9

Percent of IB Exams Passed With a Score of 4 or Above, 2005

United States	79
SREB median	75
Alabama	74
Arkansas	55
Delaware	**88**
Florida	**85**
Georgia	72
Kentucky	**76**
Louisiana	67
Maryland	**75**
Mississippi	34
North Carolina	**73**
Oklahoma	74
South Carolina	**77**
Tennessee	62
Texas	**79**
Virginia	**79**
West Virginia	**84**

Percentages in bold met or exceeded the national average.
Source: International Baccalaureate Organization.

The IB program has grown in both SREB states and across the country. In 1997, there were 170 high schools offering the IB curriculum in the nation; 47 percent of those were in SREB states. In 2005, there were 479 high schools offering the IB program, 45 percent of those in SREB states.

For further details about AP and IB in SREB states, see the upcoming companion to this report, *Progress in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate in SREB States,* which will be available at www.sreb.org.

■ Participation in dual enrollment programs is rising

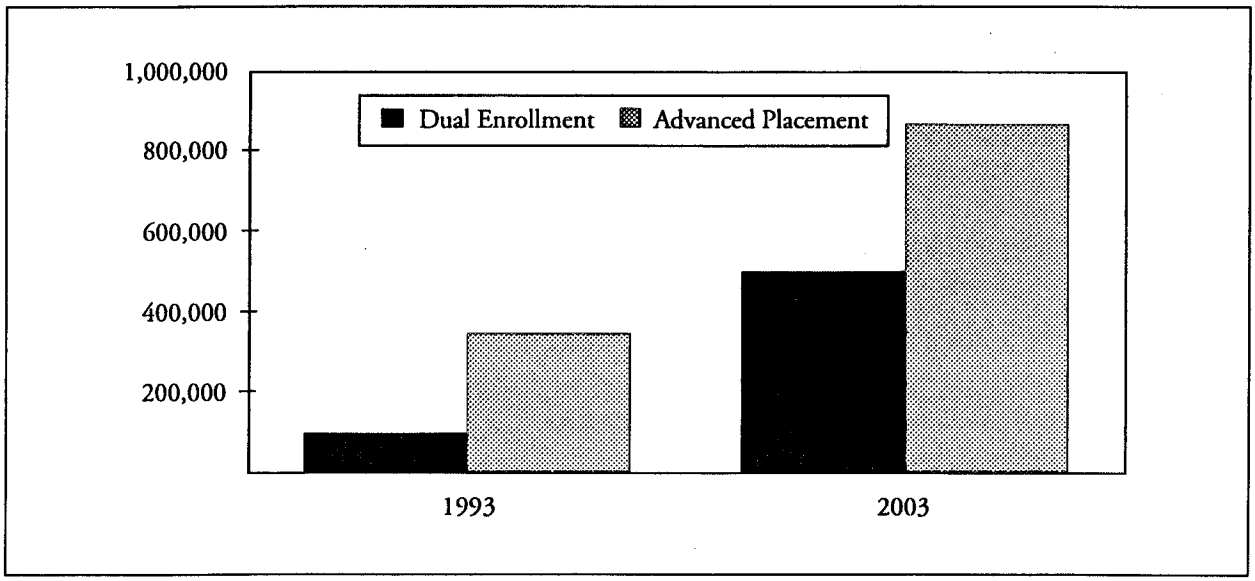
Studies estimate that the number of students in the nation participating in dual enrollment surged between 1993 and 2003 — from about 100,000 to 500,000. (See Figure 3.) This fivefold increase parallels the nearly threefold increase in students taking AP exams at the same time. Like those in AP courses, dual enrollment students can earn both high school credit *and* transferable college credit. In the case of dual enrollment, they are able to take college-level course work through a school's affiliation with a postsecondary institution.

Researchers base estimates of enrollment on counts that states provide to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Unfortunately, the counts are based on course enrollments, not head counts. While states reported 1.2 million enrollments in 2003, they counted each student who took multiple courses once *for each course* the student took.

"Southeastern states" — as defined by NCES — lag behind the rest of the nation in course enrollments. This group includes all SREB states except Delaware, Maryland, Oklahoma and Texas. NCES reports 194,000 dual enrollments for the "southeastern states," compared with 1.2 million dual enrollments for the nation. These 12 states account for 17 percent of all dual enrollments in the nation, but 23 percent of students enrolled in K-12 are in these states.

Figure 3

Estimated Number of Students Enrolled in Dual Enrollment and AP Courses, United States, 1993 and 2003



Source: National Center for Education Statistics.

NCES does not provide individual state enrollment counts. Several SREB states, however, do include *head count* enrollment data in their annual enrollment reports, and a few more have reported it to the research organization Jobs for the Future. In each case, their programs are growing.

- In Georgia, dual enrollment students in the University System of Georgia increased from 1,391 to 2,882 from 1995 to 2004. From 2000 to 2003, dual enrollment grew in Georgia's technical colleges from 3,783 students to 8,544.
- In Oklahoma, the number of students participating in dual enrollment programs at two- and four-year institutions rose from 2,247 to 3,994 from 1998 to 2004.
- Florida reported that 34,762 high school students took college-credit-bearing courses in 2004, an increase of 20 percent from 1999.
- Virginia reported that 13,915 high school students participated in dual enrollment programs in 2004, a 4 percent increase from the previous year.

Dual enrollment programs serve a variety of purposes

For many years, dual enrollment was seen as a way to challenge bright students in their junior and senior years. Many argued that it shortened their time to a college degree and reduced the course credit that their families (and the state) would have to fund. The growth of dual enrollment in recent years comes from a change in perspective. Some newer efforts at dual enrollment, including the Early College High School Initiative, are designed to improve high school graduation rates. Most of these efforts are more open to minority students and students from low-income families than ever before.

A recent study by Jobs for the Future confirmed the importance of making these courses open to more students. In Florida, students who took one or more dual enrollment courses enrolled in postsecondary studies at higher rates than students who did not. For minority students, the findings were striking. Among black students, 70 percent of those taking dual enrollment courses went on to attend postsecondary institutions, compared with 45 percent who did not. Among Hispanic students, 69 percent of those taking dual enrollment courses attended postsecondary institutions, compared with 54 percent who did not.

In the same report, Jobs for the Future showed that college costs can decrease considerably for both students and states if students earn enough college credit in high school to complete an associate's degree within a year of high school graduation. According to SREB research, on average, students in SREB states could save $1,680 in tuition and fees and over $4,000 in additional costs associated with attending college. States could save around $2,869, equal to the average annual appropriation per full-time student at two-year colleges in the SREB region.

In spite of these examples of success and potential savings, most national research on dual enrollment focuses on policy and program organization and not on measures of effectiveness. According to the U.S. Department of Education, "little rigorous research has been conducted on the effectiveness" of these programs. It is important, therefore, for states to identify performance indicators for their programs and to monitor these indicators regularly, including whether dual enrollment *actually* decreases the time-to-degree or reduces cost to the state.

"Little rigorous research has been conducted on the effectiveness" of dual enrollment programs.

U.S. Department of Education

SREB states' approaches to dual enrollment policies vary

Policies that authorize and govern dual enrollment differ from state to state, although all states do recognize dual enrollment credit for meeting high school and college requirements. Some provide statewide oversight for them, and others leave governance to institutions. In its review of dual enrollment policies in 2001, the Education Commission of the States concluded that *statewide* policies, whether by state legislation or board policy, are more effective than *institutional* policies because they are usually more comprehensive and eliminate more barriers.

- Five SREB states — Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and North Carolina — have developed state statutes that authorize dual enrollment programs.
- In six SREB states — Alabama, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia — state-level boards establish and govern these programs.
- Four SREB states — Delaware, Louisiana, Maryland and West Virginia — allow institutions to develop their own programs and policies.
- Kentucky has two separate policies: one statewide policy that governs the community college system, and one policy that allows four-year institutions to develop their own policies.

Regardless of the level at which governance and policy development take place, many of the policies do little more than authorize postsecondary institutions to collaborate voluntarily with high schools to offer dual enrollment courses. Only five — Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi and Virginia — stipulate eligibility requirements for students. A sixth state, Kentucky, specifies eligibility requirements for programs developed in conjunction with community colleges, but its four-year institutions are able to develop their own requirements. While Oklahoma does not have a statewide eligibility policy, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the State Board of Career and Technology Education have authorized partnerships between high school technology centers and technical colleges to encourage and facilitate dual enrollment for career/technical students. Students must score a 19 on the ACT (or a 15 on the PLAN assessment) in order to be eligible to receive college credit toward an associate's degree through these partnerships.

Why does this matter? NCES reports that even when institutions have eligibility requirements, they are often not comparable to their own standards of admission. Only 38 percent of U.S. institutions with academic eligibility standards for dual enrollment align these standards with their regular admission criteria. What can programs use as measures of readiness for dual enrollment courses? High school grade-point averages, placement test scores and/or college entrance-exam scores are typically used.

Just as with regular high school courses, it is critical that dual enrollment courses be consistently rigorous, especially because students will earn college credit for them. Yet, follow-up surveys of *High Schools that Work* students indicate that many students who are not on track to meet college admission standards are placed in dual enrollment courses. In fact, many appear to be headed for remedial studies when they attend college. While states have good reason to expand access to dual enrollment courses, these courses should be open only to students who are eligible for them, they should be taught to college standards, and they should be led by faculty who hold appropriate credentials.

Dual enrollment courses should be open only to students who are eligible for them, they should be taught to college standards, and they should be led by faculty who hold appropriate credentials.

Local approaches to Tech Prep vary also

The federally funded Tech Prep program is a variation on dual enrollment programs. It is a planned sequence of career/technical courses that includes both high school- and postsecondary-level work, managed by a local consortium of high schools and colleges. Within these consortia, local leaders determine eligibility criteria and curriculum standards for programs. Tech Prep students take career/technical courses in high school and receive college credit for them after they enroll for postsecondary study. Tech Prep programs lead to associate's degrees or two-year certificates in fields such as engineering technology, industrial trades, agriculture, health or business. These programs also should promote competence in math, science and communication and lead to employment.

The growth of Tech Prep programs has led to increased participation in postsecondary-level work in high school among a more diverse group of students. It also has strengthened relationships between high schools and colleges.

But like dual enrollment, Tech Prep could improve from statewide oversight. These programs vary from one local consortium to another in most states. What can state policy-makers do?

- Require that students who want to take Tech Prep courses but who are not on track for college-level English and mathematics also take courses that will get them ready. Although regulations call for Tech Prep programs to promote competence in academic skills, few programs stipulate that students taking Tech Prep courses must also take essential core courses.
- Strengthen Tech Prep programs by giving students industry-developed certification exams after they complete a required sequence of courses in high school or college. This practice would mean that Tech Prep students could earn industry-recognized credentials that are valuable in the workplace, even if they do not intend to earn a college degree.

What can you and your state do to ensure that students take and succeed in advanced courses?

- Monitor the access of students in all groups to AP and IB examinations and dual enrollment courses, and set targets for increasing the participation and performance of all groups of students, particularly minority students.
- Support all student efforts to take advanced courses and their related end-of-course exams.
- Set eligibility criteria for dual enrollment courses that are comparable to college admission standards.
- Assess the effectiveness of dual enrollment courses in preparing students for college, in shortening the time to degree and in reducing costs to the state.

FOURTH QUESTION:

Are the percentages of high school graduates who need remedial courses when entering postsecondary institutions approaching zero?

Challenge to Lead sets the toughest goal of all for college remediation: No recent high school graduate entering any technical institute or college should need remedial courses.

The most recent national survey, published in 2003, shows that the same proportion of students — 28 percent — were enrolled in remedial courses in both 1995 and 2000. About 40 percent of two-year college students and 20 percent of four-year college students needed remedial courses. More students needed remediation in mathematics than in either reading or English. (See Table 10.)

More up-to-date and detailed information is difficult to get because many SREB states do not regularly analyze statewide enrollments in remedial programs. In those that do, the results are mixed, but no state is approaching zero. While Oklahoma has reduced the percentage of first-time students in remedial courses in two- and four-year colleges, some others have shown little change or increased the percentage. (See Box 3 on page 24.)

It is disturbing that the percentages have not declined. But it is not surprising that SREB states have not yet met the high mark set by *Challenge to Lead.* **Decreasing the need for remedial education has not been a high priority for both K-12 and postsecondary education leaders.**

■ Make college readiness a high priority

In order to improve the link between the high school senior year and the college freshman year, states need to develop a clear set of college-readiness standards. They also need better information about the students who need remedial courses in college than most now have. When state leaders have clear standards and good information, they can set specific targets, track progress and hold students, parents and schools accountable for reducing the percentages of students who need remedial courses.

States need to develop a clear set of college-readiness standards and to collect better information about students who need remediation.

Table 10

Percent of First-Time Freshmen in the United States Enrolled in Remedial Courses in Public Institutions, By Subject Area and Institutional Type, 1995 and 2000

	At Least One Course		English		Mathematics		Reading	
	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000	1995	2000
Two-Year Colleges	40	42	24	23	32	35	19	20
Four-Year Colleges	21	20	11	9	17	16	8	6
All Public Institutions	28	28	16	14	22	22	12	11

Source: *Remedial Education at Degree-granting Postsecondary Institutions in Fall 2000,* National Center for Education Statistics, November 2003.

Box 3

Examples of Trends in Remedial Enrollments

- In **Oklahoma,** the percentage of first-time freshmen enrolled in remedial courses in two- and four-year colleges *declined* by 3 percentage points from 1997 to 2004.
- In **Texas,** the percentage of first-time students enrolled in remedial courses in community and technical colleges — where 82 percent of publicly supported remedial course work is taught — *increased* by 4 percentage points between 1999 and 2002.
- In **Arkansas,** the percentages of students in remedial English and reading in two-year colleges *declined* from 2002 to 2004, but the percentages in remedial mathematics *increased* slightly. At four-year colleges, there was *little change.*
- **Virginia's** remedial student enrollment in community colleges *remained constant* from 1997 to 2002.

Define and use clear college-readiness standards

Current placement standards for remedial programs vary from institution to institution within states, and in most states the standards are low. In fact, most college-readiness standards are significantly lower than the ACT benchmarks, which identify a single set of readiness standards by setting modest goals for student performance in college courses. According to ACT research, we now know that many more students than just those who take remedial courses are not ready for college. (See "Requiring the essential core is not enough" on page 9.)

The college-readiness problem is perhaps twice as large as the current remedial program statistics suggest. Many more college freshmen need extra help to be successful. But most states don't have a way to measure their student readiness because they have not defined a statewide set of placement standards separate from admission requirements and have not developed common assessments that indicate whether high school students are ready for college.

Setting and implementing these standards are huge challenges. In fact, the percentages of students required to take remedial courses in college may actually go up as new, higher college-readiness standards are introduced statewide. Increasing the percentage of students who are ready for college and reducing the need for college remediation calls for states to develop new policies. Requiring the essential core and additional courses (such as AP, dual enrollment and senior-year math) for college-bound students will help. But ensuring that these courses prepare students for postsecondary work is critical.

For college-readiness expectations to be meaningful, they should be based on a common understanding of the specific skills and knowledge that students need when they begin college-level study — and the proficiency levels at which students need to have mastered them. High school and college faculty should set these college-readiness standards together, based on finely tuned, shared views of what high school students can achieve and what it takes to be successful in college. These standards should become the basis for high school instruction and evaluations of student work. State assessments should test them.

Many SREB states are addressing these needs by making college-readiness standards the foundation for courses in the essential core. States are approaching this direct, standards-based work by considering similar actions that include:

- high school and college faculty developing joint statements of college-readiness standards, including necessary levels of performance;
- state postsecondary institutions adopting a common set of minimum standards for English and mathematics that signify readiness for college courses;
- K-12 leaders aligning the high school curriculum with the college-readiness standards and ensured they are emphasized statewide in instruction; and
- statewide high school assessments being revised to measure students' mastery of college-readiness standards no later than the 11th grade.

When states use such standards and assessments, then students, parents and school leaders know before the senior year if students are not on track for success in college; students also have time to catch up. States should also consider using end-of-course tests in English III and Algebra II — courses commonly taken in the 11th grade — to measure college readiness. With early signals about college readiness, the senior year can be used more effectively to get students ready.

States should look at the high school senior year and the college freshman year as a bridge, with both the high school and college assisting students in making the transition. Many education leaders believe the high school senior year for many students has deteriorated — into what some of them call a "wasteland." They despair that too many seniors are simply marking time to graduation. Many have few graduation requirements remaining and do not look ahead to college expectations. At the same time, education leaders worry that far too many college freshmen are not ready and need remedial courses.

How ready most students are for college is linked to whether they used the senior year to complete the essential core and take advanced courses. Maryland's report on its college-prep curriculum illustrates the importance of taking the right courses in high school to prepare for college. Lower percentages of students who completed this curriculum needed remedial courses in college. In 2003, 28 percent of Maryland students at two- and four-year institutions who completed the core needed remediation in mathematics, compared with 40 percent of students who took less than the core. In English, 18 percent of students taking the core needed remediation, compared with 22 percent of students who took less than the core.

For seniors who are not ready for college, new approaches may help them make a smooth transition from high school to college. For example, they may not be ready to take calculus — or even pre-calculus — in high school, but they would likely benefit from an intensive senior mathematics course that builds the skills they need to be successful in college algebra. North Carolina has recently implemented such a course. Similarly, students who are not on track for college may benefit more from a course that focuses on reading from contemporary literature and composition than they would from the traditional senior English literature survey. SREB's *High Schools that Work* has helped pilot such a course in three states.

SREB states have begun to use technology in high school to ensure that more students are prepared for college and careers. Web-based guidance systems, like the www.CFNC.org Web site in North Carolina, have made it easier to provide students and parents with information about what courses they need to take and what colleges will require of them. Online high school courses can provide broader access, especially for students in some schools where teachers qualified in some subjects are not available. Other states have developed online courses that help students catch up or retake essential courses so they can be prepared for college. Kentucky and Maryland are leaders in using technology to deliver these types of courses.

Track progress in college readiness

States need good information about who is ready for college, what skills they need to develop and what kinds of instruction help them. SREB has long advocated that states should collect data regularly and publish reports on their remedial programs. In fact, every state needs an annual report on remedial education that both displays and analyzes data over several years. Current state reports vary considerably. A few provide detailed statistical information and analyses of trends over several years. But in too many cases, important information and analyses are not provided. Information is sometimes buried in reports on enrollment or state appropriations — requiring policy-makers to find what they need in multiple state documents. To be effective, the reports should contain enough detail to track the progress of important groups of students. It also helps when these reports can track student performance back to students' high schools and then be reported to school officials.

SREB long ago identified the indicators about remedial programs that states should report. (See *Reducing Remedial Education: What Progress are States Making?,* for example, at www. sreb.org.) These indicators include counts of students enrolled in remedial programs; percentages of recent high school graduates enrolled in these programs; percentages of students who completed the high school college-preparatory core and still needed remediation; percentages who needed remediation in reading, English and mathematics; and the subsequent performance of students who took remedial courses in regular college courses. States should report these data for students who attend two- and four-year colleges and for racial/ethnic and gender groups.

SREB states' reports generally include fewer than half of these. Only a few states — including Georgia, Maryland and Oklahoma — report on the need for remediation by students who completed the state's college-prep curriculum and those who did not, a key indicator of the effectiveness of the state's college-prep curriculum. In addition, two important accountability indicators — performance in subsequent courses and progress toward earning a certificate or degree — are missing from almost all reports. Why are these indicators important? Without knowing whether key high school courses helped students prepare for college and whether remedial courses helped students pass freshman courses, how will states and institutions know what is working?

High-quality reports on remedial programs should go beyond merely counting participants to help policy-makers address critical policy issues by asking questions such as:

- Does taking the right courses in high school make a difference in increasing the percentage of students meeting college-readiness standards and in reducing the need for remedial education in your state?
- Has your state eliminated gaps in preparation for African-American and Hispanic students, and are remedial programs in your state closing any gaps that remain?
- Is remedial instruction in English, mathematics and reading effective?
- What types of postsecondary institutions in your state are best serving the needs of students who need remedial education?

What can you and your state do to reduce remedial rates of recent high school graduates?

- Define clear college-readiness standards.
  - Form a partnership of higher education and K-12 leaders to define a set of minimum college- and career-readiness standards in English and mathematics and the necessary levels of performance.
  - Urge all postsecondary institutions to adopt the set of minimum college-readiness standards.
- Incorporate college- and career-readiness standards and assessments in high school.
  - Revise high school course standards to include college-readiness standards.
  - Use assessments of the standards in the 11th grade to determine whether students are on track for college and career readiness, and provide extra help in the senior year for those who are not.
  - Develop new course options, such as senior mathematics, that help all students who are preparing for college to make a successful transition.
  - Provide specific guidance for all students so that they take the right courses to prepare for college and careers, and consider developing a Web-based portal to help them.
  - Use online learning to provide broader access to college-preparatory courses and to help students catch up and retake courses as needed.
- Track progress in college readiness.
  - Collect and report information on college readiness and remedial programs that is adequate to measure success and make policy decisions.
  - Develop feedback reports for high schools that detail the performance of their former students and require that these reports be used as a part of school planning.
  - Set targets for reducing rates of remediation for recent high school graduates and hold students, parents and schools accountable for making progress in meeting the targets.

SUMMING IT UP:

What can you and your state do to prepare all high school graduates for college and careers?

■ Strengthen Curriculum

- Require the essential core courses for all high school students. Restrict other options.
- Require that all students take additional academic courses or a series of courses in a career field.
- Adopt college- and career-readiness benchmarks and align course standards and assessments to them.
- Use end-of-course exams to promote the rigor of all high school courses.

■ Close Achievement Gaps

- Hold schools accountable for the performance of all groups of students and make closing achievement gaps a priority in accountability systems.
- Conduct research to determine if all groups of students have access to rigorous courses.
- Include information on all groups of students in all reports on student performance so that resources can be directed to those who are behind.
- Provide support for or restructure low-performing schools, especially those with large minority populations.
- Give students the academic support they need to improve.
- Assign high-quality teachers to low-performing schools.

■ Promote Advanced Courses

- Monitor the demographics and performance of students in all groups taking advanced courses, and set targets for increasing participation and performance for all groups of students.
- Support all student efforts to take advanced courses.
- Set eligibility criteria for dual enrollment courses that are comparable to college admission standards.
- Assess the effectiveness of dual enrollment courses.

■ Eliminate the Need for Remediation

- Form a partnership of higher education and K-12 leaders to define a set of minimum college- and career-readiness standards in English and mathematics and the necessary levels of performance.
- Urge all postsecondary institutions to adopt this same set of minimum college-readiness standards.
- Use assessments of the standards in the 11th grade to determine whether students are on track for college and career readiness, and provide extra help in the senior year for those who are not.
- Develop new course options, such as senior mathematics, that help all students who are preparing for college to make a successful transition.

■ Eliminate the Need for Remediation, continued

- Provide specific guidance for all students so that they take the right courses to prepare for college and careers.
- Consider developing a Web-based portal that helps students prepare for college and careers.
- Use online learning to provide broader access to college-preparatory courses and to help students catch up and retake courses as needed.
- Collect and report information on college readiness and remedial programs that is adequate to measure success and make policy decisions.
- Develop feedback reports for high schools that detail the performance of their former students and require that these reports be used as a part of school planning.
- Set targets for reducing rates of remediation for recent high school graduates and hold students, parents and schools accountable for making progress in meeting the targets.

Appendix

Core Courses Required for High School Graduation in SREB States

	Diploma	Number of Required Units				Total Units
		English	Social Studies	Mathematics	Science	
Recommended High School Curricula						
ACT	Core	4	3	3+[1]	3	NA
SAT	Core	4	3	3+[1]	3	NA
High Schools That Work	Core	4	3	4	3	NA
High School Diploma Requirements						
Alabama	Standard	4	4	4	4	24
	Advanced Academic	4	4	4	4	24
Arkansas	College-Prep	4	3	3	3	21
Delaware	Standard	4	3	3	3	22
Florida	Standard	4	3	3	3 (2 Lab)	24
	Career-Prep (3-year)	4	3	3	3 (2 Lab)	18
	College-Prep (3-year)	4	3	3	3 (2 Lab)	18
Georgia	Technology/Career-Prep	4	3	3	3 (Lab)	22
	College-Prep	4	3	4	3 (Lab)	22
Kentucky	Standard	4	3	3	3	22
Louisiana	Standard	4	3	3	3	23
Maryland	Standard	4	3	3	3 (Lab)	21
Mississippi	Standard	4	3	3[2]	3	20
North Carolina	Career-Prep	4	3	3	3	20
	College Tech-Prep	4	3	3	3	20
	College/University-Prep	4	3	3[3]	3	20
Oklahoma	Standard	4	3	3	3	23
South Carolina	Tech-Prep	4	3	4	3	24
	College-Prep	4	3	4	3	24
Tennessee	Tech-Prep	4	3	3	3	20
	University-Prep	4	3	3	3	20
Texas	Minimum[4]	4	3	2	2	22
	Recommended	4	4	3	3	24
	Distinguished	4	4	3	3	24
Virginia	Standard	4	3	3	3 (Lab)	22
	Advanced	4	4	4	4 (Lab)	24
West Virginia	Standard	4	3[5]	3[5]	3	24

"NA" indicates not applicable.

"Lab" indicates that the state requirements specify that the science courses be laboratory-based.

The table does not include requirements for students with disabilities.

[1] "3+" indicates that these organizations advocate that all students must have three years of mathematics: Algebra I, II and geometry; they also recommend that students have at least one year of mathematics beyond Algebra II.

[2] Ninth-graders entering in Fall 2005 must complete four mathematics courses, which may include pre-algebra and Algebra I courses taken in eighth grade.

[3] Ninth-graders entering in Fall 2002 must complete four units of mathematics. The additional unit must be above Algebra II.

[4] Students must have written consent from their counselor and a parent in order to graduate using Texas' Minimum High School Program requirements.

[5] Ninth-graders entering in 2004 must complete four units of social studies; ninth-graders entering in 2006 must complete four units of mathematics.

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The following reports may be found on the SREB Web site at www.sreb.org.

Challenge to Lead Education Goals Series

Getting Serious About High School Graduation, 2005.

This report documents that graduation rates are low — especially for minority students and males — and that rates have declined since the 1980s. Additionally, too few young adults who need them receive alternative credentials, such as the GED. The report explains how graduation rates are calculated and offers promising practices for increasing them by improving accountability systems, focusing on the ninth grade, reforming high schools and developing media campaigns to promote graduation.

Focusing on Student Performance Through Accountability 2005.

SREB states face new challenges as they adapt to the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.* This report reviews SREB states' progress in implementing their accountability systems and in improving student performance in all groups. The report documents that many states may not be improving performance at adequate rates to meet the legislation's 2014 deadline. It discusses Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools and includes state profiles of performance data for each state compared with NCLB targets.

Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity, 2005.

This report documents the benefits of providing more education for adults who did not complete high school and the urgency of increasing the number of high school dropouts who pursue further education. It focuses on three key indicators of progress: enrollments in Adult Basic Education, GED completion and enrollments of students who earned the GED credential in postsecondary education. Some SREB states have made strides in developing policies and programs for adult learners, and the report profiles their efforts and results. The report offers some promising practices for addressing the adult learning challenge facing SREB states.

Building a Foundation for Success by Getting Every Child Ready for School, 2005.

This report reviews SREB states' progress in getting young children prepared to start first grade ready to learn. SREB states have a long history in this endeavor, particularly in addressing the needs of young children from low-income families. The report documents that this group of children is increasing, profiles SREB states' efforts to meet standards set for high-quality preschool programs and shows how SREB states assess school readiness. The report also addresses health and social services that are available in SREB states to children at risk of not being ready for school.

Creating College Opportunity for All: Prepared Students and Affordable College, 2005

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals call on states to ensure that many more youth — particularly from minority groups and low-income families — prepare for, enroll in and graduate from college. This means that college must be affordable for these students. This report examines the current affordability gap and what steps could make college a possibility for more young people. It focuses on the need for state-funded financial assistance and ways that states can help prepare a new generation of residents for the future.

Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades, 2004.

This report documents SREB states' progress in getting middle grades students ready for high school. The analyses are based on scores and standards of state achievement tests and on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The report also describes promising practices for preparing middle grades students for high school, based on technology applications that have been implemented in SREB states and on the work of SREB's *Making Middle Grades Work.*

Mastering Reading and Mathematics in the Early Grades, 2004.

This report documents SREB states' progress in getting early grades students ready for the middle grades. The analyses are based on scores and standards for state achievement tests and on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The report also outlines how federal funds for reading programs are distributed to districts and schools, what states are requiring of students who do not meet state standards at the end of third or fourth grade, and what retention and promotion policies states have developed for students who do not meet standards.

Progress Being Made in Getting a Quality Leader in Every School, 2004.

This report documents SREB states' progress in redesigning the preparation and development of school principals. The analyses are based on information collected in interviews with state agency personnel on six key indicators. The report also outlines actions that states can take to make progress on each indicator, describes promising practices being implemented by some states and identifies challenges states face in creating new policies that can drive more effective programs and practices.

Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom, 2004.

Every student deserves qualified teachers, but states do not have enough qualified teachers for every subject in every school. This report documents SREB states' progress toward getting a qualified teacher in every classroom. It highlights the essential policies that SREB states should resolve to develop and to support with adequate resources.

SREB

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SREB States Lead the Nation in Rate of Student Improvement

ATLANTA — Fourteen of SREB's 16 member states have improved student achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) at a rate at or above the national average, according to *Quality Counts 2006*, the annual report released January 4 by *Education Week*. NAEP tests in reading and math are given to fourth- and eighth-graders across the nation every two years. The report looked at state gains on the NAEP, known as "The Nation's Report Card," since 1992.

The only states that surpassed the national rate of improvement in both fourth- and eighth-grade math were SREB states — Arkansas, Delaware, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Texas. Delaware — an SREB state — was the only state in the nation to make better-than-average gains in both fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math.

"This is very good news," SREB President Dave Spence said. "It shows that efforts that were going on in SREB states even before the *No Child Left Behind Act* are paying off."

Even more significantly, Spence noted, the report showed that SREB states were among the nation's leaders in closing the achievement gaps between groups of students. "This bucks the national trend toward widening gaps in many states," he said.

Quality Counts reported no SREB states in which the achievement gap widened for any group:

- Twelve SREB states — among only 28 in the nation — reduced the achievement gaps between black and white students and between poor and non-poor students in fourth-grade math: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.
- Texas decreased the gap in eighth-grade math between both Hispanic and white students, and between poor and non-poor students.
- Delaware, Florida and Texas reduced the gap between poor and non-poor students in fourth-grade reading. Delaware also reduced the black-white gap in eighth-grade reading.

The report also graded states on progress in standards and accountability. SREB states accounted for 13 of the 28 states that received A's or B's. Six SREB states got A's: Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, South Carolina and West Virginia.

For details, see *Education Week's* individual state profiles at www.edweek.org.

SREB

Getting Serious About High School Graduation

2005

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CHALLENGE TO LEAD SERIES

This report was developed by Rebecca Daugherty, research associate, educational policies; and Joan Lord, director of educational policies; with assistance from Alice Presson, special consultant, *High Schools That Work.* Gene Bottoms and Lynn Cornett, senior vice presidents, provided guidance.

It is part of the *Challenge to Lead* education goals series, directed by Joan Lord. For more information, e-mail joan.lord@sreb.org. *Goals for Education: Challenge to Lead* is available on the SREB Web site at www.sreb.org. A full listing of goals, with the indicators for the goal on high school graduation, is printed on the inside back cover.

A Message from the President of SREB

Twenty years ago, nobody would have predicted that high school graduation rates would decline. Over these decades, SREB states have made gains in achievement in the early grades and have led the nation in developing educational accountability systems. Despite all of these efforts, these investments have not paid off in higher graduation rates. It is time for us all to get serious about high school graduation for all students.

Making progress toward all young adults having a high school diploma in your state is critical — not just for the well-being of individuals, but for the well-being of your state. High school dropouts do not have the knowledge and skills required to be successful in today's work force, and many of them show up in welfare budgets, public health costs and prison rolls.

The trends in high school graduation rates in SREB states are depressing.

The percentage of U.S. students earning a high school diploma in the traditional four years has dropped since the early 1980s. Today, one in three young people does not graduate on time with a diploma in most SREB states. Only seven other states in the nation have rates this low. And the story is especially bleak for minority and male students. In SREB states — and the nation — less than half of black and Hispanic male students graduate from high school with a diploma in four years. The chances that young adults without diplomas will earn GED credentials are also slim.

As SREB states have raised standards for graduation over the last decades, many schools, districts and states have not changed their strategies to help all students meet new, higher requirements. More students now are choosing to drop out or to earn alternative high school credentials, which do not pay off in the same way that diplomas do. And too many school administrators have not yet gotten serious about high school reform. Many of these administrators view students and parents as the problem, even though their strategies for increasing student success have not increased their high school graduation rates. Low student motivation and lack of parental support play an important role in students' decisions to drop out, but states, districts and schools need to do more to help students stay in school and graduate.

This report offers strategies that can increase high school graduation rates.

Research shows that we can identify by age 9 — and perhaps even earlier — which students are likely to drop out of high school. Many of these students hit a brick wall in the ninth grade because they enter high school unprepared for more challenging work.

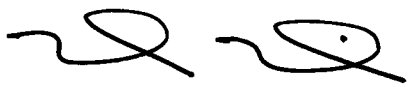
To help them, two other SREB *Challenge to Lead* reports — *Mastering Reading and Mathematics in the Early Grades* and *Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades* — track SREB states' progress and offer promising practices for helping young students get on track for graduation. Your state cannot afford to focus efforts entirely on young children, however.

This *Challenge to Lead* report, *Getting Serious About High School Graduation*, not only describes the challenges SREB states face in meeting the goal that all young adults have a high school diploma, but it also provides policies and strategies that your state can — and should — use to get serious about high school graduation. It is possible to adjust state policies to help high schools increase their graduation rates and to change the schools themselves so that more students have the incentive and the support they need to stay in school and graduate. In fact, SREB's *High Schools That Work* leads the way in helping high schools in SREB states improve graduation rates while they raise student achievement.

It is time for SREB states to get moving with these key strategies:

- Set ambitious high school graduation targets for all groups of students and make them a part of state accountability systems.
- Focus attention on the ninth grade.
- Reform high schools, particularly those that are low performing, to make them more relevant to and effective for all students.
- Communicate strong stay-in-school messages to students in danger of dropping out and to their families.

When your state uses these strategies to make real changes in the way the state, districts and schools operate, you will know that your state is getting serious about high school graduation.



Mark Musick
President

Getting Serious About High School Graduation

All young adults have a high school diploma — or, if not, pass the GED tests.

SREB *Challenge to Lead* Goal

A high school education is essential preparation for today's world, yet far too many young people are beginning their adult lives without a high school diploma.

These young people qualify for only the lowest-paying jobs and are barred from colleges and technical colleges unless they complete a high school equivalency program. On average, an individual without a high school diploma earns $300,000 less over a lifetime than a high school graduate. The economic disadvantage grows even larger compared with individuals with a high school diploma *and* postsecondary education.

For SREB states, the cost also adds up to real dollars. In fact, high school dropouts cost your state hundreds of millions of dollars — not only in lost tax revenue from low earnings and high unemployment, but also because of the increased public health, prison and social services they typically require.

For many years, SREB has emphasized the importance of helping more students earn a high school diploma. SREB's 1988 *Goals* report set the graduation target at 90 percent. In 2001, when those goals were assessed and the current *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education were adopted, the target was raised to call for *all* young adults to earn a high school diploma — or, if not, to pass the GED tests. Today, the goals continue to call for states to focus on giving students extra support, more time, flexible schedules, different teaching methods, and creative uses of technology — all aimed at helping more students graduate from high school.

Despite these efforts, however, progress has not been steady. For decades after World War II, the nation's graduation rates improved substantially. But the disappointing fact is that in recent years, **the percentages of high school students graduating within four years with a regular diploma have been declining in most SREB states.**

In addition, only 4 percent of adults ages 18 to 24 without diplomas earn the GED credential in any year in SREB states. Studies show that adults over age 24 without a diploma have very little chance of ever earning a high school credential.

The responsibility for reversing the current decline in graduation rates has to be shared — and there are many actions that states, communities and schools can take to stop the trend. No student aspires to be a high school dropout, but many students do not take high school work seriously. They and their parents need to set their graduation from high school as a top priority. In addition, states, districts and schools must work harder to find ways to give more individual attention to high school students, particularly in schools that consistently lose a significant percentage of their students before graduation. Among other effective reforms, schools can adapt their programs to meet the

academic and social needs of their students rather than force all students to follow the same paths — or force them out.

No student aspires to be a high school dropout. Yet graduation rates in SREB states are declining.

The federal Comprehensive School Reform Program, funded through the *No Child Left Behind Act*, also helps states reform their low-performing high schools by using research-based models as their guide. SREB's *High Schools That Work* is heralded as one of these nationally recognized models and, in fact, is used across the nation to guide school improvement.

High Schools That Work schools are expected to raise achievement to national averages, to blend traditional college-preparatory studies with quality career and technical studies, to promote continuous school improvement and to improve the quality of school leadership.

This report begins with a quick discussion of the various ways that graduation rates are calculated, to help you determine your state's progress toward getting all students to graduate. It presents promising policies and practices — including school improvement efforts — that states can use to identify, motivate and support students likely to drop out and to help them stay in school and graduate.

You will know that your state is making progress in improving high school graduation rates when:

- the percentages of all groups of students graduating from high school with regular diplomas increase to above the national averages;
- greater percentages of students meet state standards on end-of-course tests and comprehensive exams; and
- more young adults without a high school diploma, 18 to 24 years old, pass the GED tests.

In a Nutshell: Understanding How Graduation Rates Are Calculated

High school graduation rates are currently estimates of percentages of students who graduate from high school "on time" (within four years) with a regular high school diploma. They are calculated in various ways. It is important to understand how and why these rates differ; it is more important to know that they all report surprisingly similar and disappointing results.

This report relies on the four most commonly used estimating methods, three of which are based on comparing the number of students who enter ninth grade with the number who graduate four years later. The fourth measure is based on the percentage of students promoted in each of the high school grades. (See Box 1 for the four methods.)

The difference among these methods is the manner in which they define the groups of students they track through high school — called "cohorts." All states do not count graduates in the same way. Some states count those who earn the GED or an alternative credential among the graduates they report, and some do not. The information that your state reports to the National Center for Education Statistics does not indicate how many with alternative credentials are included among the graduates.

Box 1

Four Methods Commonly Used to Estimate High School Graduation Rates

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES): This formula divides the number of graduates that states report by the number in the cohort. It calculates cohort size by adding the total number of dropouts during the four years of high school to the number of graduates. All counts are based on state-reported dropout data, which tends to under-count dropouts. Because these counts are a key factor in estimating the size of the cohort, NCES' estimates of high school graduation rates tend to be higher than those that use more reliable enrollment data. Also, some states include students receiving the GED and other alternative credentials in their counts of regular high school graduates. For these states, the NCES graduation rates include these students. In 2001, NCES was able to calculate graduation rates for 39 states.

Graduates ÷ [Graduates + (Dropouts: 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grades)]

The three alternative calculation methods below rely on NCES enrollment data for their calculations, and all are vulnerable to inconsistent reporting of students who earned alternative credentials.

Manhattan Institute: Jay Greene of the Manhattan Institute calculates graduation rates by dividing the number of high school graduates by an adjusted ninth-grade cohort size. He accounts for the bulge in enrollment common to the ninth grade (which results primarily from the high failure rate of ninth-grade students) by averaging the enrollments of the cohort in eighth, ninth and 10th grades. He adjusts cohort size for transfers into or out of states by using U.S. Census Bureau estimates of the change in the number of high school-age children in each state.

Graduates ÷ Average of Cohort Enrollments (8th, 9th and 10th grades) – as adjusted for transfers

Postsecondary Opportunity: Tom Mortenson of the organization Postsecondary Opportunity uses the simplest calculation of the four. He divides the number of graduates by the number of ninth-graders four years earlier. This method does not account for the ninth-grade bulge or transfers into or out of the cohort. The resulting rates tend to be somewhat lower than those of other estimates.

Graduates ÷ Cohort Enrollment (9th grade)

Urban Institute: Chris Swanson of the Urban Institute estimates a ninth-grade student's chances of graduating four years later by examining four separate cohorts of students enrolled in the same year. This statistic is a product of the percentage of ninth-graders promoted to 10th grade, the percentage of 10th-graders promoted to 11th grade, the percentage of 11th-graders promoted to 12th grade, and the percentage of 12th-graders graduating in a given year. It is based on the fall enrollment and the number of high school graduates reported by the states to NCES.

% of 9th-Graders Promoted × % of 10th-Graders Promoted × % of 11th-Graders Promoted × % of 12th-Graders Graduating

Some methods consider the beginning size of a graduation class to be the number of ninth-graders who enrolled four years earlier. Others reduce the size of this group to account for the so-called ninth-grade "bulge," which occurs because more students fail ninth grade than other grades. These calculations estimate the number of first-time ninth-graders by comparing eighth-, ninth- and 10th-grade enrollments.

Still other calculations estimate the size of the class as it began high school by adding the reported number of dropouts during the high school years to the graduate count. These estimates assume that any others who were enrolled as ninth-graders remained enrolled or transferred to other schools.

Currently, there is considerable variation in the ways that states report their graduation rates in their state report cards. In 2004, Secretary of

Box 2

U.S. Department of Education Task Force
Recommended Formula for Estimating High School Graduation Rates, 2005

Graduates ÷ Class Size = Graduation Rate

Graduates include students entering ninth grade for the first time and graduating on time with a regular diploma plus students transferring into the cohort in 10th, 11th and 12th grades and graduating on time with a regular diploma.

Class size equals the number of students in ninth grade for the first time and all transfers into the class minus students documented as transfers, imprisoned or deceased.

Education Rod Paige convened a panel of experts to develop and recommend a standard measure of high school graduation rates that all states could use in reporting their graduation rates as required by the *No Child Left Behind Act.*

The task force recommended such a calculation in its 2005 report. (See Box 2.) The rate will calculate the percentage of students entering ninth grade for the first time who graduate on time with a regular diploma. The formula depends on accurate state reporting of students transferring to other schools.

Therefore, it calls for states to develop new, computer-based tracking systems so that school officials can determine if students who leave their school actually do transfer to another school. Currently, however, states are not required to use this formula — and many cannot because they do not have the necessary tracking systems in place.

QUESTION 1:

How do graduation rates in SREB states compare to the national rate?

In order to make progress toward all young adults having a high school diploma, SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals set the target for SREB states' graduation rates above the national rate. Currently, most SREB states have not achieved this benchmark. High school graduation rates in the median SREB states trail the nation by 3 percentage points to 6 percentage points, according to the four calculation methods described in Box 1.

The biggest challenges are in the five SREB states that trail the national rate by a substantial margin. According to researchers at the Manhattan Institute, Postsecondary Opportunity and the Urban Institute, the rates in five states — Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee — are 60 percent or less, and these states rank among the bottom 10 states in the nation. (See Table 1.)

The most encouraging news is that five SREB states lead the nation in the percentages of students graduating from high school. Arkansas, Maryland, Oklahoma, Virginia and West Virginia exceed the national average by at least three of the calculation methods. These states consistently have rates that exceed 70 percent by any measurement. The remaining SREB states — Alabama, Delaware,

Table 1

High School Graduation Rates in SREB States, 2001

	NCES	Manhattan Institute	Postsecondary Opportunity	Urban Institute
United States	80%	70%	67%	68%
SREB states	77	65	61	64
Alabama	75	61	58	61
Arkansas	74	73	73	71
Delaware	80	64	64	64
Florida	—	59	55	53
Georgia	64	55	51	56
Kentucky	79	70	64	65
Louisiana	63	64	59	65
Maryland	83	78	74	75
Mississippi	71	60	57	58
North Carolina	—	67	59	64
Oklahoma	79	79	73	70
South Carolina	—	53	48	51
Tennessee	72	58	55	58
Texas	—	66	62	65
Virginia	81	76	75	74
West Virginia	83	78	73	71

"—" indicates not available; numbers in red exceed the national average.

Note: SREB percentage is the average of the two SREB median states. See Box 1 for how the organizations calculated these rates.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics, Manhattan Institute, Postsecondary Opportunity and Urban Institute.

Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina and Texas — have graduation rates that are below the national average by at least three of the four methods.

In the end, however, striving to meet the national average is a first step. According to three of the calculation methods, approximately three in 10 students in the nation will not earn a regular diploma on time. Many policy-makers — including the nation's governors — have voiced concern over the nation's lack of progress in getting more young people through high school. The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires that states report these rates and include them as one indicator of adequate yearly progress for high schools, districts and states. The SREB states that have not reached the national average need to meet this target — but also reach beyond it.

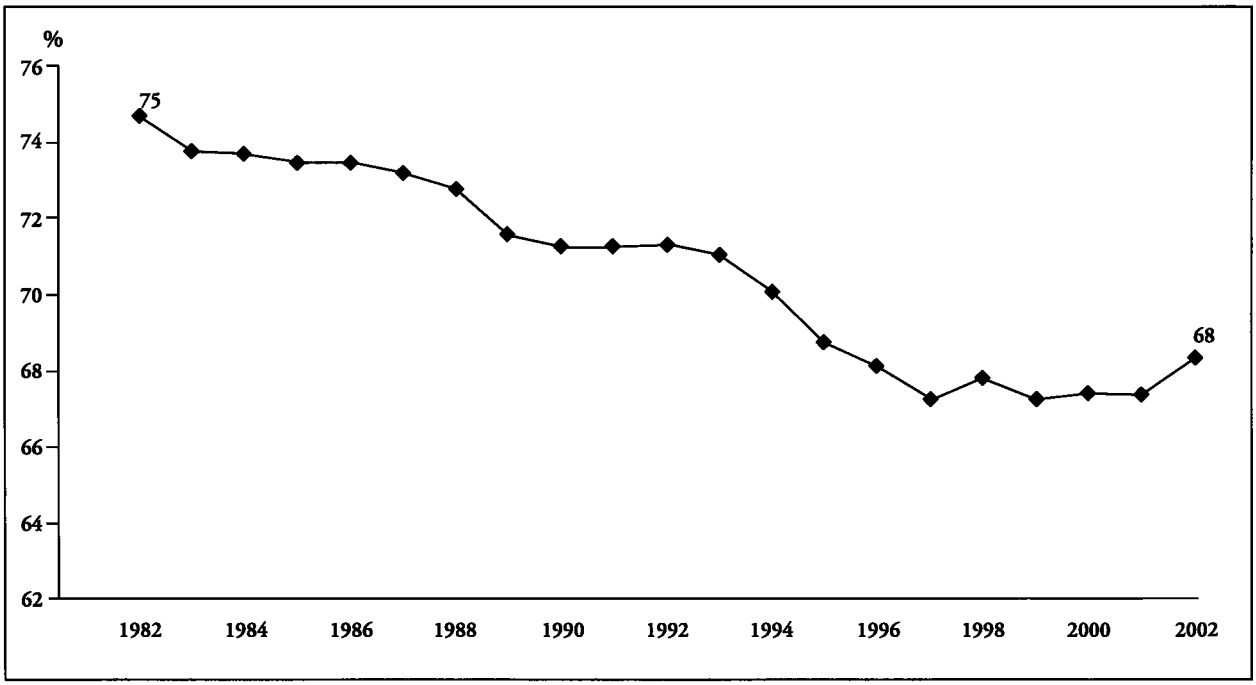
■ Long-term trends are disturbing

Have we made progress? What are the trends? Certainly more students are earning high school

Figure 1

High School Graduation Rate Trend in the United States, 1982 to 2002

Percent of Students Earning a High School Diploma on Time Has Declined



Note: See Box 1 for how Postsecondary Opportunity calculated these rates.
Source: Postsecondary Opportunity, from National Center for Education Statistics data.

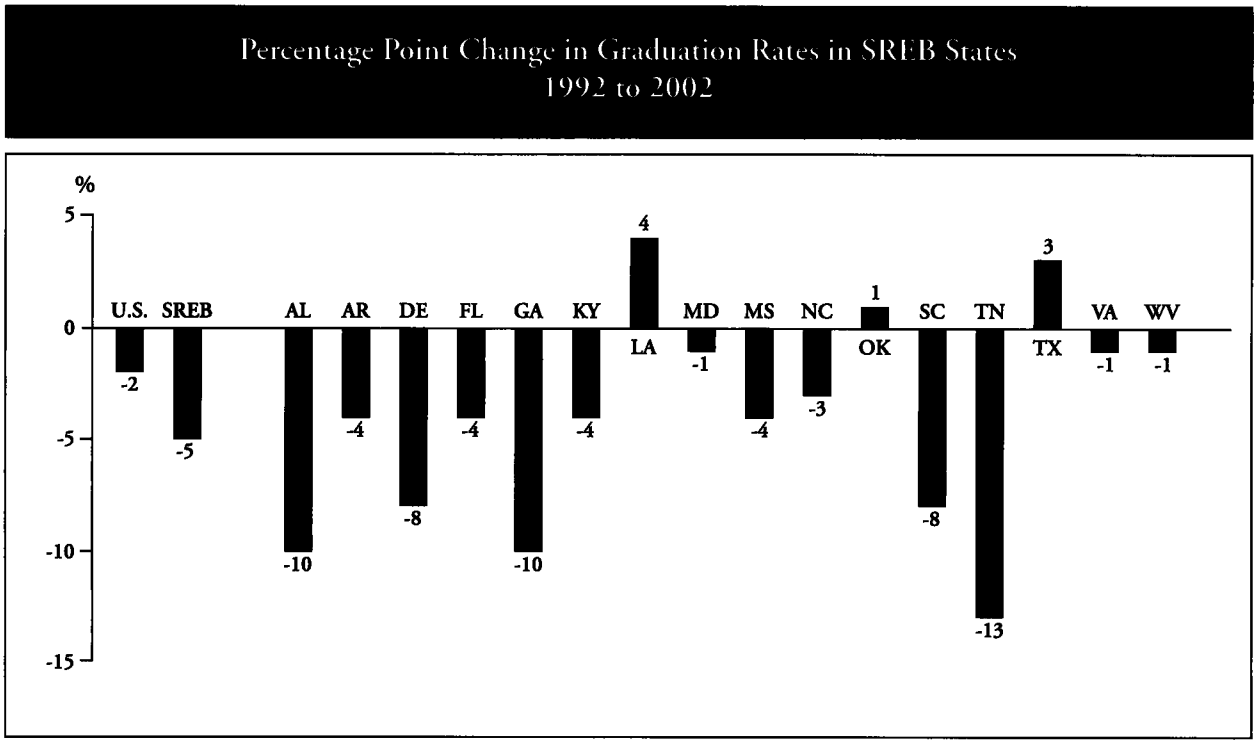
credentials today — either a diploma or an equivalent — than in the 1940s, when the U.S. Census Bureau reported that only 38 percent of young adults (ages 25 to 29) had done so. By 1977, the rate earning high school diplomas or an equivalent had grown to 85 percent, and it has not fallen below 85 percent since then. It was 88 percent in 2001. The U.S. Census Bureau also reported that among young people ages 16 to 19 who were not in school, the percentage reporting that they had not earned high school diplomas or equivalent credentials declined from 10 percent in 1991 to 9 percent in 2001.

But the trend is very different if you focus on high school graduation rates for students who earn a diploma within the traditional four years of high school. According to calculations from Postsecondary Opportunity, the upward trend in these graduation rates reversed in the early 1980s. The rate reached its highest point — 75 percent — in 1982 and then began a slow decline. In 2002, Postsecondary Opportunity calculated a 68 percent graduation rate, a 7 percentage point drop from 20 years earlier. (See Figure 1.)

According to the Manhattan Institute's method, the national rate declined by 2 percentage points between 1992 and 2002. In the SREB median states, the decline — a 5 percentage point drop — was even greater than the nation's. Only three SREB states — Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas — increased their high school graduation rates over this period. Oklahoma also exceeded the national average. Three SREB states — Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee — declined 10 percentage points or more. (See Figure 2.)

Why have these declines occurred? Some

Figure 2



Note: SREB percentage is the average of the two SREB median states. See Box 1 for how the Manhattan Institute calculated these rates.
Source: Manhattan Institute, from National Center for Education Statistics data.

combination of factors most likely accounts for these results: demographic changes in SREB states; increased graduation requirements; the implementation of state accountability systems, some of which include tests that students must pass to graduate; and decreased emphasis on advanced career and technical studies in some states.

■ Graduation gaps among groups of students are unacceptable

In addition to setting targets for the number of graduates, the *Challenge to Lead* goals emphasize the need to track how the graduation rates of **all groups of students** compare with national averages. The current record in SREB states is, again, mixed.

The SREB median states have higher graduation rates for black and Hispanic youth, compared with black and Hispanic youth nationally. Black students graduating from high school in SREB median states led the nation's black students by 4 percentage points in 2001, according to the Urban Institute's calculation — the only method of the four that follows racial/ethnic and gender groups. In the SREB median states, 54 percent of black students graduated, compared with 50 percent nationally.

But the disappointing facts are that the graduation rates for minority youth lag considerably behind the rates for white youth. And the 69 percent of white students who graduated from high school in SREB median states are 6 percentage points below the national average — 75 percent — for white students. (See Figure 3.)

Graduation rates for both males and females in SREB median states trail males and females in the nation. In 2001, 70 percent of females graduated from high school, compared with 72 percent nationally. Only 60 percent of males graduated from high school, compared with 64 percent nationally. The differences in the rates at which

Figure 3

Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2001

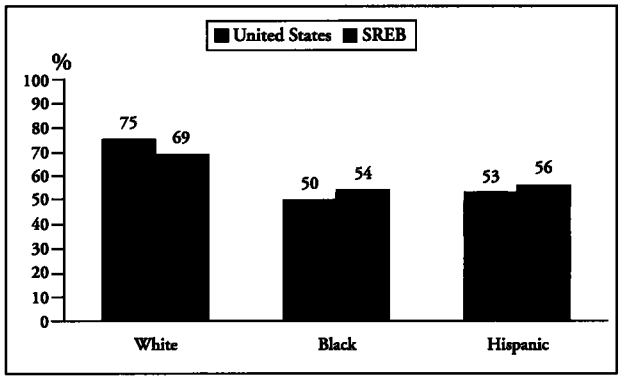
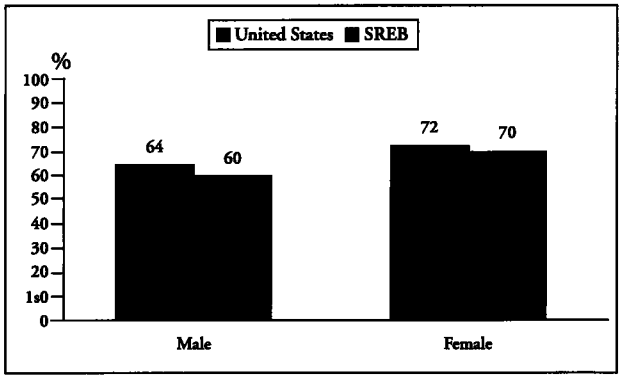


Figure 4

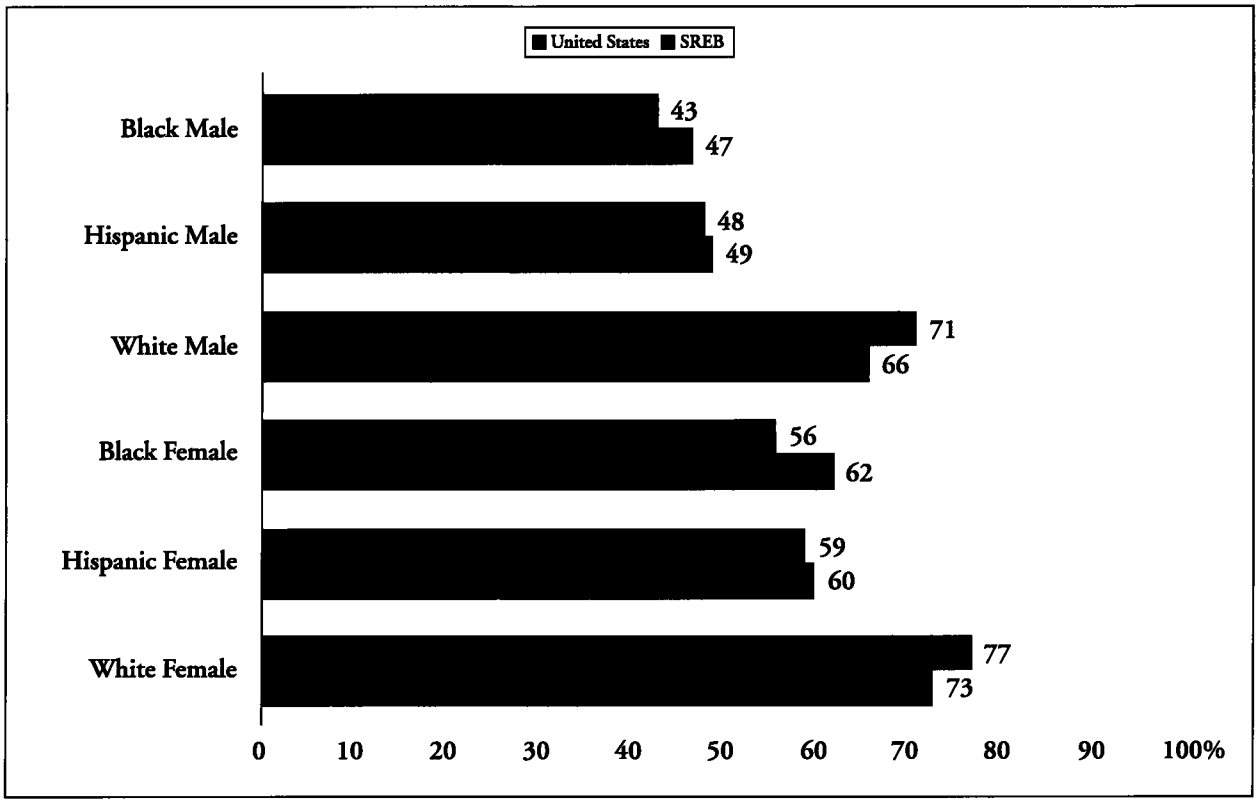
Graduation Rates by Gender, 2001



Note: SREB percentage is the average of the two SREB median states. See Box 1 for how the Urban Institute calculated these rates.
Source: Urban Institute, from National Center for Education Statistics data.

Figure 5

Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2001



Note: SREB percentage is the average of the two SREB median states. See Box 1 for how the Urban Institute calculated these rates.
Source: Urban Institute, from National Center for Education Statistics data.

males and females are graduating from high school are alarming. Graduation rates for males trail rates for females by 10 percentage points in the SREB median states. The story in the nation is similar; while 72 percent of female students graduated in 2001, only 64 percent of males did. (See Figure 4.)

The racial/ethnic and gender gaps are even more troubling when examined together. In fact, there is no good news. White students in SREB states — both male and female — graduated from high school at lower rates than their counterparts nationally in 2001. Even though graduation rates in the SREB median states for both Hispanic and black male and female students exceeded the national rates, **fewer than half of Hispanic and black males graduated from high school in both the United States and in SREB states.** Hispanic and black females graduated at higher rates than their male counterparts, but they still trailed the rates for white females by a sizeable margin — over 10 percent. (See Figure 5.)

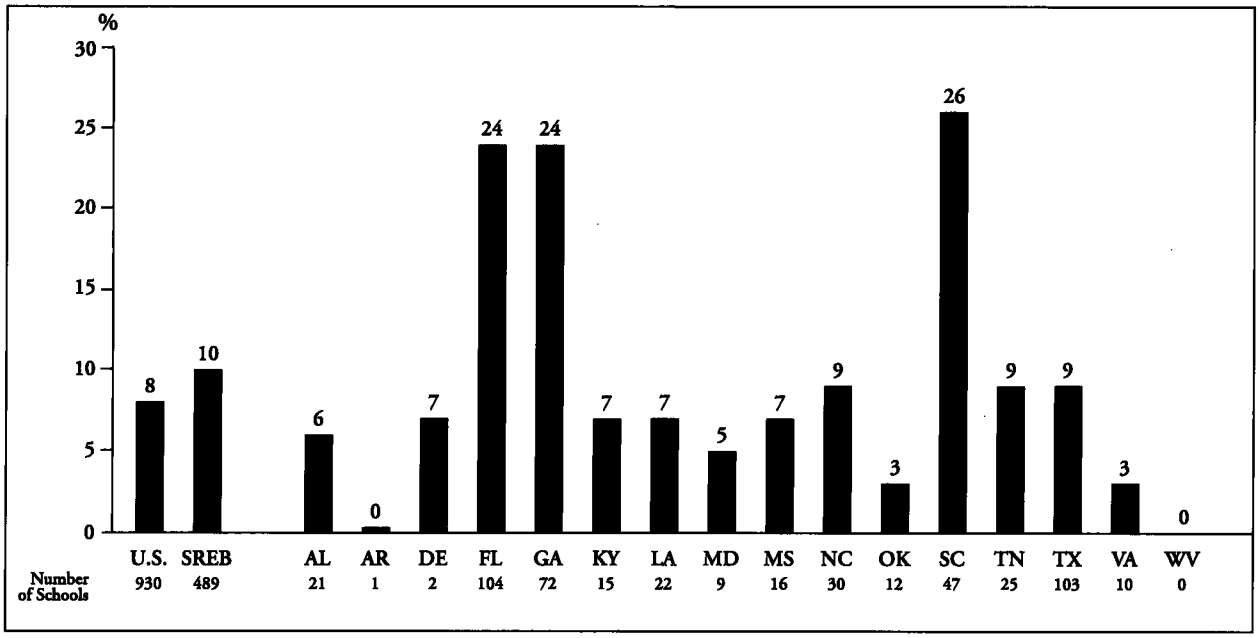
■ Small percentages of high schools produce large percentages of dropouts

Recent research at Johns Hopkins University examines high schools with enrollments of 300 or more students and shows that a substantial proportion of the nation's dropouts attended high schools in which less than half of all students make it to the senior year. Nationally, these schools tend to be in cities. In SREB states, however, they are located throughout the region — in small towns, suburban and rural areas, as well as in urban centers.

In fact, 49 percent of all high schools in the nation in which less than half of the class makes it to the senior year are located in SREB states. Approximately 10 percent of all high schools with 300 or more students in SREB states graduate less than 50 percent of their students. (See Figure 6.) These high schools are of special concern since minority youth are much more likely to attend these schools.

Figure 6

Percent of High Schools (with 300 Students or More) in Which Less Than Half of Students Reached the Senior Year, 2002



Source: Johns Hopkins University.

QUESTION 2:

How are students performing on end-of-course and comprehensive exams?

Another *Challenge to Lead* measure for determining the percentages of all young adults who earn a high school diploma is student performance on end-of-course and comprehensive exams. For most states, these exams are intended to increase the value of the high school diploma and to evaluate whether high school graduates meet state standards for graduation and whether the high school curriculum has given students the skills to meet those standards.

In most SREB states, student scores on end-of-course and comprehensive exams are improving. (See Tables 2 and 3.) Many of these exams have been in place, studied and refined over time. Others are new. Comparisons show that these exams — and the use of exam results — vary greatly among states.

■ Two types of statewide high school exam

SREB states use either or both of the two types of exams. North Carolina and South Carolina use both. Georgia is implementing new end-of-course exams and continues to give comprehensive exams. Although it is slated to eliminate the comprehensive exams, no timetable has been set. Six states — Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana and Texas — use comprehensive exams only. Seven states — Arkansas, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia — use end-of-course exams only. (See Table 4.)

Comprehensive exams assess the degree to which students have mastered the objectives in the required courses they have taken. These exams, first administered in 10th or 11th grades, include a

Table 2

Pass Rates on End of Course Exams in SREB States 2001 to 2004

	Impact on Students	Algebra 1				English 1			
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2001	2002	2003	2004
Arkansas	None	20%	37%	44%	53%	22%	37%	41%	45%
Georgia	Factored into course grades	—	—	—	60	—	—	—	77
Maryland	Reported on student transcripts	—	52	53	59	—	44	40	53
Mississippi	Required for graduation	—	79	82	91	—	69	78	83
North Carolina	Factored into course grades	76	79	79	80	69	70	81	82
Oklahoma	Reported on student transcripts	—	—	22	30	—	66[1]	62[1]	62[1]
South Carolina	Factored into course grades	—	—	—	79	—	—	—	—
Tennessee	Required for graduation	—	77	75	81	—	—	87	90
Virginia	Required for graduation	74	78	78	80	82	86	93	89

All rates are initial pass rates.

"—" indicates not applicable.

[1] Score listed is for English II test.

Sources: State departments of education. Compiled by SREB, April 2005.

mathematics section and a reading/English section. In some states, comprehensive exams also have sections on writing, science and social studies.

End-of-course exams assess students' mastery of the standards for particular courses. These exams are administered to students of any grade level when they complete the courses. End-of-course exams are used in core courses, such as Algebra I and English literature, and act as statewide, standardized final examinations. End-of-course exams are more effective than comprehensive exams in promoting consistently rigorous instruction statewide. These exams set a standard for student performance in core courses and enable teachers to focus on teaching the knowledge and skills reflected in the exams.

Some states that require exams for graduation also use alternative assessments of student mastery of skills, such as the SAT, ACT, Advanced Placement exams and employer certification/licensing exams. For example, in Virginia, where students must pass end-of-course exams, students may substitute state-approved, alternative assessments for some of these exams. Their choices include Advanced Placement exams, the College Board's subject area tests (known as SAT II tests) and career and technical certification tests, such as licensure exams for emergency medical technicians and Microsoft-certified professionals.

■ How statewide high school exams are used

The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires all states to test students in mathematics and reading/language arts at least once between 10th and 12th grades. Both comprehensive and end-of-course exams can be used to meet this requirement. By 2008, all states also must test high school students in science. *No Child Left Behind* requires that states use test-score data to measure whether each school makes adequate yearly progress toward the goals set by state accountability systems and to provide individual students with feedback on their academic strengths and weaknesses. All but three SREB states use these assessments in a variety of ways that go beyond the basic requirements. (See Table 4.)

Table 3

Pass Rates on Comprehensive Exams in SREB States 2001 to 2004

	Impact on Students	Type of Pass Rate Reported	Mathematics				English			
			2001	2002	2003	2004	2001	2002	2003	2004
Alabama	Required	Cumulative	—	95%	97%	96%	96%	96%	97%	95%
Delaware	Diploma type	Initial	35	43	45	53	60[1]	66[1]	67[1]	71[1]
Florida	Required for graduation	Initial	—	73	73	76	—	59[1]	58[1]	54[1]
Georgia	Required for graduation	Cumulative	93	93	91	95	96	97	95	96
Kentucky	None	Initial	61	62	64	67	69[1]	68[1]	71[1]	74[1]
Louisiana	Required for graduation	Initial	51	55	59	61	56	58	53	60
North Carolina	None	Initial	—	—	69	71	—	—	64[1]	66[1]
South Carolina	Required for graduation	Initial	81	81	81	80	85[1]	82[1]	84[1]	85
Texas	Required for graduation	Initial	89	92	68	85	—	—	69	87

"—" indicates not applicable.

[1] Score listed is for reading test.

Sources: State departments of education. Compiled by SREB, April 2005.

Thirteen SREB states hold — or plan to hold — students accountable to some degree for their performance on the exams:

- Nine states — Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia — require students to pass some or all of their exams to graduate with regular diplomas.
- North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee require that scores on end-of-course exams account for percentages of students' final grades in the courses for which the exams are administered.
- Delaware uses the test scores to determine the type of diploma (standard or distinguished) a student receives. In 2008, Delaware will require students to pass the exams in order to graduate.

Table 4

SREB States' Comprehensive

State	Name of Exam	Type
Alabama	Alabama High School Graduation Exam	Comprehensive
Arkansas	End-of-Course Exams	End-of-course
Delaware	Delaware Student Testing Program	Comprehensive
Florida	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test	Comprehensive
Georgia	Enhanced Georgia High School Graduation Tests	Comprehensive[2]
	Georgia End-of-Course Tests	End-of-course
Kentucky	Kentucky Core Content Test	Comprehensive
Louisiana	Graduation Exit Examination for the 21st Century	Comprehensive
Maryland	Maryland High School Assessments	End-of-course
Mississippi	Subject Area Testing Program	End-of-course
North Carolina	North Carolina High School Comprehensive Test	Comprehensive
	End-of-Course Tests	End-of-course
Oklahoma	End-of-Instruction Tests	End-of-course
South Carolina	High School Assessment Program	Comprehensive
	End-of-Course Exams	End-of-course
Tennessee	Gateway Assessment Program	End-of-course
Texas	Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills	Comprehensive
Virginia	Standards of Learning	End-of-course
West Virginia	End-of-Course Exams	End-of-course[3]

[1] In 2005 through 2007, students scoring well on the Delaware Student Testing Program will receive a distinguished diploma. All other students will receive a regular diploma. Delaware plans to require that students pass the comprehensive test in order to graduate by 2008.

[2] Georgia plans to phase out the comprehensive EGHSGT, but no timetable has been set. Currently, students' end-of-course test scores account for 15 percent of the final grades for the courses in which they are administered.

[3] Maryland's State Board of Education has proposed requiring students to pass the end-of-course exams in order to graduate. This policy would take effect in 2009.

[4] The North Carolina General Assembly has postponed indefinitely the development of the North Carolina High School Exit Exam. North Carolina requires students to pass the eighth-grade Competency Tests in mathematics and reading to graduate.

[5] Currently, North Carolina's end-of-course exam scores account for at least 25 percent of the final grades in core subjects, but students are not required to pass the exams to graduate. These core courses are Algebra I; Algebra II; biology; chemistry; Economic, Legal and Political Systems; English I; geometry; physical science; physics; and U.S. history. Beginning with the class of 2010, North Carolina students will be required to pass end-of-course exams in Algebra I; biology; Economic, Legal and Political Systems; English I; and U.S. history in order to graduate.

- Maryland, North Carolina and Oklahoma include test scores on student transcripts, which college admissions officers and future employers may view.

Arkansas and Kentucky, on the other hand, use the data from their assessments only to gauge school accountability and to give feedback to students. Scores affect schools' adequate yearly progress ratings but do not determine students' grades in courses or eligibility for graduation. West Virginia has discontinued its statewide end-of-course exam program; local school districts now govern the administration of end-of-course exams.

Table 4 (continued)

and End-of-Course Exams

Passage Required for Graduation?	Subjects Tested
Yes	English, mathematics, reading and science
No	Algebra I, geometry and literature
Score determines the type of diploma awarded[1].	Mathematics, reading and writing
Yes (mathematics and reading only)	Mathematics, reading and writing
Yes	English, mathematics, science and social studies
No. Scores are factored into course grades[2].	Algebra I, American literature, biology, economics, English I, geometry, physical science and U.S. history
No	Mathematics, reading, science, social studies and writing
Yes (English, mathematics and either science or social studies)	English, mathematics, science and social studies
No. Scores are included in student transcripts[3].	Algebra I/data analysis, biology, English I and government
Yes	Algebra I, biology, English II and history
No[4]	Mathematics and reading
No. Scores are included in student transcripts and are factored into course grades[5].	All core areas
No. Scores are included in student transcripts.	Algebra I, biology, English II, U.S. history and writing
Yes	Mathematics, reading and writing
No. Scores are factored into course grades[6].	Algebra I, Biology I, English I, physical science and U.S. history
Yes	Algebra I, biology and English II[7]
Yes	English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies
Yes[8] (English I, English II and four other tests of the student's choosing)	All areas
No	Algebra I, geometry, reading/language arts, science and social studies

[6] South Carolina requires that scores on end-of-course exams account for 20 percent of the final grades for the courses. The Algebra I exam began in 2003; exams in English, biology and physical science were introduced in 2004.

[7] Tennessee also gives end-of-course exams in English I and Math Foundations II and plans to give end-of course exams in Algebra II, chemistry, geometry, physical science and U.S. history, but passing these tests will not be required for graduation. Test scores account for at least 15 percent of the final grades for all courses in which they are administered. Students are required to pass Gateway tests in Algebra I, biology and English II to graduate.

[8] Virginia also permits students to substitute state-approved alternate assessments — such as Advanced Placement and career/technical certification tests — to meet graduation requirements.

[9] A West Virginia statute has discontinued the statewide end-of-course exam program. Local boards of education now govern administration.

Sources: State departments of education. Compiled by SREB, May 2005.

■ Variation in statewide exams

Each state develops its own comprehensive and/or end-of-course exams based on state curriculum standards. In most cases, students must answer about half of the questions correctly to pass. The rigor of these exams, the different standards on which they are based, and cut scores set by states are all factors in the percentages of students who pass them. (See Tables 2 and 3.) Furthermore, some states that use comprehensive exams report the "initial pass rate" — the percentage of students who pass the exam the first time they take it. Other states report the total percentage of seniors who pass the exam — a "cumulative pass rate." Students first take comprehensive exams in 10th or 11th grade and repeat them until they pass. Seniors may have taken the exams two or more times before they pass. Cumulative pass rates report the total number of seniors who have passed by the end of the senior year. These rates do not reflect failures of students who eventually pass, and they eliminate the scores of students who drop out before the senior year. As a result, pass rates are higher in states that report cumulative pass rates than in states that report initial pass rates.

In addition to factors related directly to the exams and the reporting methods, student performance also varies based on how the test results affect students. Scores generally are higher on exams that are required for graduation. Students have high motivation to meet these standards. Exams with less impact on students tend to have lower pass rates. The following examples demonstrate how state policies may affect pass rates:

- Virginia students are required to pass the English I Standards of Learning exam in order to graduate. In 2004, 89 percent of students passed this exam the first time they took it. Virginia students are required to pass four other approved exams, but they choose which exams they take from many options. The pass rates are lower for these exams. For example, 80 percent of students passed the Algebra I exam.
- Oklahoma's Algebra I exam had a pass rate of 30 percent in 2004. The Oklahoma end-of-course exam results are reported on student transcripts, but passing them is not required for graduation. Mississippi requires that students pass their end-of-course exams to graduate. The Algebra I exam had a 91 percent pass rate in 2004.
- Texas students are required to pass a comprehensive exam. In 2004, 85 percent of students who took the exam for the first time passed the mathematics portion, and 87 percent passed the English portion. The pass rates were lower in North Carolina, where scores have no effect on graduation. In 2004, 71 percent of North Carolina students who took the exam for the

Box 3

Virginia's Project Graduation

Virginia's Project Graduation provides students at risk of not meeting the Standards of Learning (SOL) testing requirements that became effective with the graduating class of 2004 with academic year and summer academies and online tutorials. These programs are designed to help those students who have not passed the SOL reading and/or mathematics test before entering grade 12.

The online tutorials include sample tests for students and provide students immediate feedback about the correctness of their responses. Teachers also log on to the online tutorial Web site to monitor the progress of their students so they can provide further assistance.

The Virginia online reading tutorial was unveiled in February 2004, in time to help 1,077 seniors — 93 percent of those who used the program — pass the English I test and graduate on time. Overall, 2,178 members of the class of 2004 earned standard diplomas after participating in one or more Project Graduation activities.

first time passed the mathematics portion; 66 percent passed the reading portion.

A recent study commissioned by the Virginia Department of Education has shown that in 2004 — the first year Virginia's students were required to pass Standards of Learning end-of-course exams to graduate — the graduation rate for white students remained stable, but the rates for black and Hispanic students dropped significantly, by 5 percentage points and 12 percentage points, respectively. In preparation for the implementation of this new requirement, Virginia introduced Project Graduation to help students pass the exams they need for graduation, and it appears to be effective for many. (See Box 3.)

QUESTION 3:

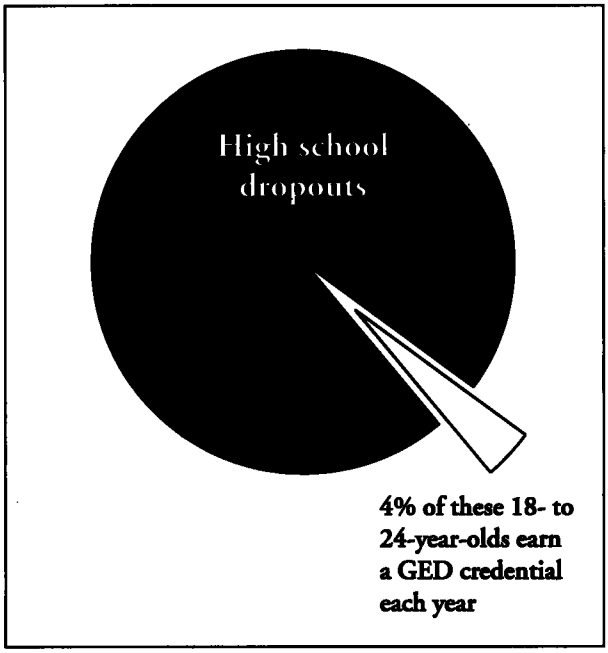
Are young people who need GED credentials getting them?

The *Challenge to Lead* goals are clear that SREB states should encourage all students to graduate from high school with a regular diploma. While the most common alternative — the GED credential — does open doors for adults without a diploma, completing the GED credential does not translate into the same wages in the workplace or prepare the individual as well for postsecondary training and education. Yet, for the person who does not have a high school diploma, the GED credential serves as a highly recognized substitute and gives entry to some jobs, training programs and colleges.

In most SREB states, **one in three young adults does not earn a regular diploma within four years.** Only seven other states in the nation have rates this low. Some of these young people go on to graduate within fix or six years, and others earn certificates of completion and alternative diplomas. Those who do not, however, need another chance to earn a high school credential. These adults generally have not had a good experience in school. Once they leave high school, they often have more responsibilities to family and jobs than before. Attracting them to adult education and GED preparation programs is not easy. In fact, only four in 100 young adults — ages 18 to 24 — without a high school diploma earn a GED credential in any year. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7

Too Few U.S. Adults Ages 18 to 24 Without High School Diplomas Earned the GED Credential, 2000



Sources: American Council on Education and U. S. Census Bureau.

Table 5

Age Distribution of GED Credentials Issued: 2001

	Number Who Passed the GED Test	Percent of Those Who Passed			
		Ages 16 to 17	Ages 18 to 19	Ages 20 to 24	Ages 25 and Older
United States	329,515	20	29	25	27
SREB states	144,861	22	27	24	25
Alabama	5,947	24	31	23	23
Arkansas	5,075	35	21	18	26
Delaware	251	14	28	34	25
Florida	28,388	22	34	22	22
Georgia	13,471	18	34	25	23
Kentucky	7,342	16	25	29	30
Louisiana	5,810	27	26	22	25
Maryland	4,560	27	26	24	23
Mississippi	5,233	27	31	22	20
North Carolina	8,269	22	22	26	30
Oklahoma	6,179	19	23	27	32
South Carolina	4,251	22	28	26	24
Tennessee	9,055	27	27	21	25
Texas	29,365	20	24	24	32
Virginia	8,814	29	28	20	23
West Virginia	2,851	18	32	25	25

Source: American Council on Education.

While this figure indicates that it is unlikely that a recent dropout will earn a GED credential, the rate is even more dismal for adults ages 25 and over — only one in 100.

It is, therefore, critical to attract dropouts to GED programs as they leave school or soon thereafter. Nearly half of the individuals who pass the GED tests do so before age 20. In 2002, three-fourths of all GED credentials are earned by individuals ages 24 or younger. One in five GED credentials awarded in SREB states is awarded to a 16- or 17-year-old — a person whose high school class has not yet graduated. The percentages of GED credentials awarded to these students in 2002 ranged from 35 percent in Arkansas to 14 percent in Delaware. (See Table 5.)

Some SREB states have attempted to align policies on the minimum age for taking the GED tests with the compulsory attendance age. Four — Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia and Maryland — have set both their compulsory attendance age and the minimum age for taking the GED tests at age 16. Four others that set the compulsory attendance age at 16 — Alabama, Florida, North Carolina and West Virginia — have policies that set the minimum age for receiving the GED credential at age 18. All of these states, however, permit younger individuals to sit for the GED

Table 6

When Can Students Drop Out, and When Can They Receive a GED Credential in SREB States?

Compulsory Attendance Age	Minimum Age for GED Credential[1]			
	16 Years	17 Years	18 Years	19 Years
16 Years	Arkansas Delaware Georgia Maryland		Alabama Florida North Carolina West Virginia	Kentucky
17 Years		Mississippi South Carolina	Tennessee	
18 Years			Oklahoma Texas Virginia	Louisiana

[1] Exceptions are granted to the age policies on a case-by-case basis.

Sources: State departments of education.

tests as early as age 16. In every SREB state — regardless of the compulsory attendance age or the minimum age for taking the GED tests — a substantial proportion of all GED credentials go to 16- and 17-year-olds. (See Tables 5 and 6.)

Some SREB states have become active in helping students earn the GED credential if they are on the verge of dropping out of high school. According to the American Council on Education, eight SREB states — Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia — offer programs that help students who are not likely to graduate earn a GED credential. These programs require students to stay in school and earn high school credits while they earn the GED credential. They provide students not only with the credential necessary to enter postsecondary education and work force training, but also with the knowledge and skills they develop in the academic courses they complete. (See Box 4.)

Box 4

Alabama and Kentucky Offer Support to High School Students Preparing for GED Tests

Alabama has attempted to encourage struggling students to stay in school by providing them with test preparation through its virtual school and by offering an alternative to its graduation test. Since 2000, the state has offered the Adult Alternative High School Diploma for students who complete the Alabama high school curriculum and pass the GED tests but do not pass the Alabama High School Graduation Exam.

Kentucky's Secondary GED Program allows students who have decided to drop out to take the GED tests while remaining in high school. These students must also participate in efforts to earn credit in the hope that they can graduate with a regular diploma. To qualify for the program, students must be at least two years behind their high school cohort, have earned at least four credits toward graduation and meet a minimum score on the ninth-grade-level basic skills test. Districts and schools must provide interventions and support, including alternative education tutoring, counseling and advising, prior to enrolling any student in the test preparation program.

What Can You and Your State Do?

The fact that high school graduation rates are low and that they are declining is disturbing. Twelve years ago when today's seniors were starting school, no one would have predicted this outcome. By then, accountability systems were emerging and school reform programs were under way around the nation. It is little wonder, therefore, that policy-makers in SREB states — and the federal *No Child Left Behind Act* — insist on marked improvement.

Four strategies can help. It is time for all SREB states to undertake them.

1. Set ambitious high school graduation targets for all groups of students and make them a part of state accountability systems.
2. Focus attention on the ninth grade.
3. Reform high schools, particularly those that are low performing, to make them more relevant to and effective for all students.
4. Communicate key stay-in-school messages to students in danger of dropping out and to their families.

■ STRATEGY ONE: ***Set ambitious high school graduation targets for all groups of students and make them a part of state accountability systems.***

The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires states to track both the academic achievement and the graduation rates of high school-age students. For schools, districts and states to make adequate yearly progress, they must meet goals — or show improvement — in both of these areas. Although the federal legislation gives states latitude in setting annual academic achievement targets, it sets the ultimate goal — that 100 percent of students score at or above state standards by 2014. However, the legislation does not set annual targets or an ultimate goal for graduation rates. It leaves these targets up to the states. Some states set the percentage of a class they expect to graduate, some set annual minimum rates of improvement and some use a combination. Schools and districts can be considered adequate on the graduation measure if they reach the target rate or meet the improvement rate. (See Table 7.) Some of these targets are quite low, particularly those that set a small percentage of improvement — as low as one tenth of a percent, or *any* improvement — as sufficient progress.

Hold schools and districts accountable for bringing all groups to ambitious graduation targets.

No Child Left Behind's annual academic goals apply not only to *all* students, but also to *specific groups of students*, including those identified by race/ethnicity, low income, disabilities, and limited English proficiency. However, *No Child Left Behind* does not require states to hold schools and districts accountable for bringing *all groups* to their graduation targets even though it requires that states report the graduation rates for these groups. This means that graduation rates of the various groups of students do not figure in the adequate yearly progress determinations. According to a survey conducted by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, Oklahoma is the only SREB state — and one of only nine states in the nation —

Table 7

High School Graduation Goals Set in SREB States For *No Child Left Behind*

State	Goal for High School Graduation Rates
Alabama	90%, or less than 10% dropout rate
Arkansas	57%
Delaware	No specific goal; maintain or improve current rate
Florida	85%, or 1% annual increase
Georgia	60%, or any annual increase
Kentucky	76%
Louisiana	90%[1], or 0.1% annual increase
Maryland	81%
Mississippi	72%, or any annual increase
North Carolina	90%, or 0.1% annual increase
Oklahoma	69%
South Carolina	No specific goal; any annual increase
Tennessee	90%
Texas	70%
Virginia	57%, to be reviewed in 2007
West Virginia	80%

[1] Louisiana calculates the percentage of students who do not drop out, rather than the percentage who graduate.

Sources: State departments of education.

that holds schools accountable for the graduation rates of each group of students. Virginia plans to do so in 2006.

Policy-makers should ask why goals for high school graduation in their states have been set as they have. They should ensure that their states set ambitious targets — including ones for minority youth and males — and hold schools and districts accountable for meeting them.

Ensure that state assessment systems balance increasing student achievement and graduation rates.

In strengthening their accountability systems, policy-makers and education leaders also must be sure that their assessment systems themselves do not contribute to low graduation rates. These assessments should reflect high standards if a state is to have a strong work force and a high quality of life. But in states that require students to pass the assessments in order to graduate, students should be given sufficient help in reaching these standards and in preparing for the tests. They should also be given multiple — and regular — opportunities to take the assessments so that those who do ultimately meet standards are able to show their competence immediately.

While all of these states do provide test preparation and several chances at taking the tests, states can go even further. A promising practice for doing so comes from New Zealand. It provides "banks" of test items — similar to those used on its

assessments — that teachers can use throughout the school year in their instruction and classroom testing. Making assessment items available in SREB states could give students practice on the kinds of items they will face on the state assessments and give them (and their teachers) feedback on how they are progressing on state standards. Teachers who see that students are having trouble on the test-bank items could take corrective action as a part of regular instruction.

States can also use technology to make retesting more flexible for students who failed the assessments the first time. Student could be asked to retake only those parts of the assessments they did not pass and could be given opportunities to retake the tests whenever they are ready for testing — rather than waiting for preset test dates. Providing this level of service to students is not simple. It means that states must have a large bank of test items to use in creating computer-generated tests, and they must maintain it securely and replenish it regularly so that the subsequent tests are as valid as the initial tests in measuring student competence. Doing so should pay off in greater incentives for students as they prepare to retake tests.

States can also provide alternative assessments. Students often take a wide range of assessments, including college admissions tests and employer certification examinations. States should explore which of these could substitute for regular state assessments, as Virginia and Florida have done, for students who are having difficulty on the state tests.

Pay attention to key indicators throughout the education pipeline.

In addition to the on-time graduation rates of all groups of students, policy-makers should pay attention to other key indicators as markers of students' progress toward graduation. In monitoring these indicators, policy-makers can help all students make continuous progress toward graduation and can determine where the problems are in the education pipeline. These indicators include:

- eighth-grade scores on state assessments;
- the retention rate in ninth grade;
- gaps in scores among groups of students;
- both initial and cumulative pass rates on end-of-course and comprehensive exams; and
- the graduation rates of students who enter the senior year.

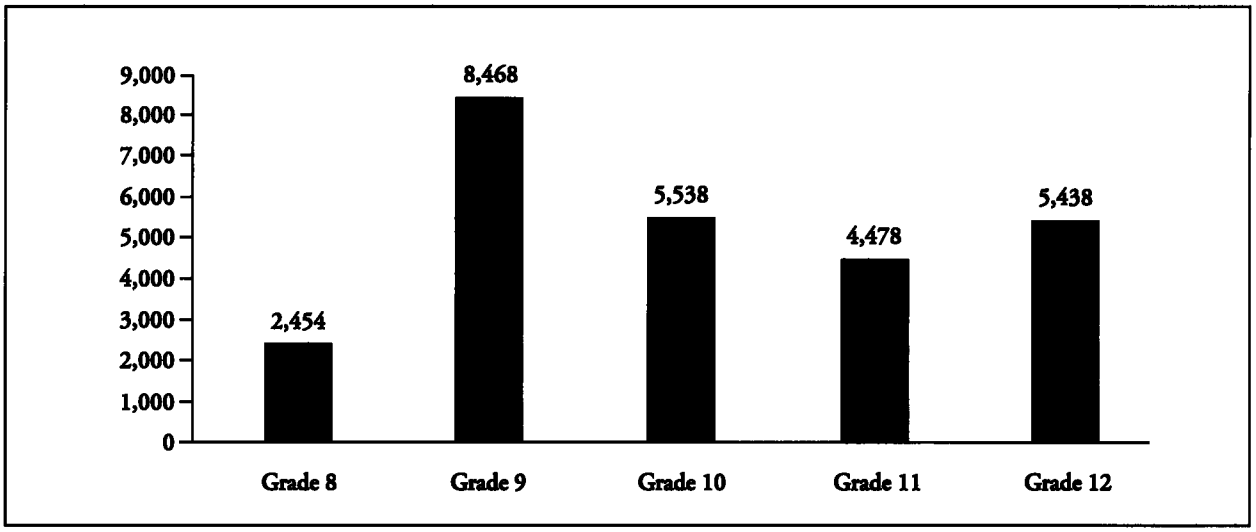
■ STRATEGY TWO: ***Focus attention on the ninth grade.***

The ninth grade is pivotal for many students, especially for minority and male students. The 14- and 15-year-olds who moved through the early and middle grades without developing the necessary academic, study and social skills for success in high school often feel overwhelmed in ninth-grade courses.

The ninth grade is more academically rigorous than earlier grades, and these underprepared students are not able to keep up. Ninth grade requires independent study skills, which most students learned in the early and middle grades. Those who did not develop them are seriously impaired in high school.

Figure 8

Number of Students Who Dropped Out
Florida, 2004



Source: Florida K-20 Data Warehouse.

In addition, studies show that ninth-grade classes tend to have more students per teacher and that ninth-grade students are less likely than students in other high school grade levels to have highly qualified teachers. The result is predictable: More students fail classes in the ninth grade than in any other year.

In most states, these students are only a year or so away from the minimum legal age at which they can drop out of school; in fact, many ninth-graders who have been retained in early or middle grades may already have passed the age of compulsory attendance. In 2004, Florida reported that nearly 8,500 students dropped out in the ninth grade, by far the highest number in any grade level. (See Figure 8.)

Every SREB state except one — Louisiana — enrolls more students in ninth grade than in any other. Louisiana has large enrollments a year earlier in the pipeline; its high-stakes assessment testing retains students in eighth grade if they do not meet state standards. A small part of this eighth-/ninth-grade bulge results from an inflow of students to public schools from private and home schools. But most of this increase comes from students repeating the grade because they have failed. The bulge is the smallest in Arkansas, at 103 percent of eighth-grade enrollment — meaning that the ninth-grade enrollment is 3 percent larger than eighth-grade enrollment the previous year. The percentage ranges upward to 128 percent in Florida. Overall, the 2003 ninth-grade enrollment in SREB states was 116 percent of the 2002 eighth-grade enrollment. (See Table 8.)

Table 8

Ninth Grade Bulge, 2003

	9th-Grade Enrollment, 2003 + 8th-Grade Enrollment, 2002
United States	113%
SREB states	116
Alabama	109
Arkansas	103
Delaware	111
Florida	128
Georgia	117
Kentucky	114
Louisiana	104[1]
Maryland	113
Mississippi	107
North Carolina	115
Oklahoma	107
South Carolina	124
Tennessee	111
Texas	121
Virginia	116
West Virginia	106

[1] Louisiana has an eighth-grade bulge that results from its eighth-grade assessment. The percentage shown is eighth-grade enrollment divided by seventh-grade enrollment.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics.

States and schools should do all they can to ensure that the middle grades prepare students well for the rigorous curriculum of the ninth grade. A 2004 report in the SREB *Challenge to Lead* education goals series, *Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades*, documents gains over the last 10 years in the achievement of both early and middle grades students, but it concludes that many middle grades students are still not ready for high school. The gains made in the earlier grades have not yet led to increases in high school graduation rates. The report concludes with promising practices that can improve the readiness of middle grades students for high school. It emphasizes that policies, instructional strategies and extra help for students all make a difference. (The report is available at www.sreb.org.)

Support middle-grades-to-high-school transition programs.

State policies in many states have already begun to address the middle-grades-to-ninth-grade transition. Alabama and Tennessee require every high school to provide a transition program to help middle grades students. Florida requires that all middle grades students with low scores on state tests have a personalized plan to help them succeed academically. Florida also provides students, beginning in the eighth grade, with interactive, self-paced software that prepares them for the required Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test. (See Box 5 for other state practices.)

Additionally, ninth-grade students should be able to connect the academic core with the real world. Introducing students to career and technical courses early can increase the relevance of core courses and encourage them to excel in these courses.

All high schools should take responsibility for the success of their ninth-grade students. Policy-makers should call for each high school to create a plan for improving the promotion rate to 10th grade while holding to high standards. It should indicate how high schools will work with middle grades schools on curriculum alignment, how teacher resources will be allocated, how school time will be used and how students will be given extra support. Policy-makers will know the plans are likely to make a difference when high schools assign highly qualified teachers to ninth-grade classrooms, balance the teacher/student ratio in ninth grade with the ratios in other grades to ensure that ninth-graders get the attention they need, establish schedules that give students more time in critical subjects, work with parents to create individualized school-completion and career-goal plans, provide students with individual mentors to monitor student progress toward graduation, and enroll ninth-grade students at risk of failure in at least one career/technical course to connect the school curriculum with career preparation.

Require schools to create a plan for improving the promotion rate from ninth to 10th grade.

Box 5

Promising Practices for the Ninth Grade

Summer Programs:

Some high schools and districts offer summer programs to help entering ninth-graders make the transition from middle grades. These programs help students master course content while teaching them to study, manage time, and cope with change and an increased workload. The best of them help students accept responsibility for their own learning; build positive relationships with other students, teachers and tutors; set both short- and long-term goals that go beyond meeting minimum requirements; and connect their education with career options.

Swain County High School (**North Carolina**) provides a four-week summer class for students who need help adjusting to high school. Students can earn one high school credit in the summer program and complete follow-up activities during the school year.

Ninth-Grade Academies:

Some schools have organized comprehensive programs for ninth-graders, sometimes called ninth-grade academies. These academies create small learning environments within high schools in which ninth-graders are the focus. They receive support from a team of teachers to help make the transition to high school.

Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School (**South Carolina**), a school where 88 percent of the students are African-American and 66 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, has created ninth-grade academies with double periods of Algebra I and English I, plus daily reading, writing and homework. School officials report increased communication with parents and fewer ninth-grade students failing since the creation of the academies.

Intensive Instruction in Key Courses:

Many students enter ninth grade without the skills they need to take and pass college-preparatory courses in English/language arts and Algebra I. States can use a variety of strategies to strengthen students' academic skills just before they enter and while they are in ninth grade. One key strategy is to block extra time for key subjects for students who are behind.

Mount Pleasant High School (**Texas**), which has a large Hispanic student population, requires English-language learners to participate in special semester-long, double-blocked classes of English I and II. Since the program began, the school has seen a dramatic drop in course failures and increases in passing rates on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills in English, mathematics and sciences; and in SAT scores, attendance, percentages of first-time ninth-graders reaching grade 12 on time, and the graduation rate.

The Maryland Department of Education implemented an interactive, online Algebra I course for students who need special intervention in order to be successful. The course can be used independently by students or in the classroom by trained teachers.

■ STRATEGY THREE: ***Reform high schools, particularly those that are low performing, to make them more relevant to and effective for all students.***

While ninth-grade transition programs can help, the dropout problem extends beyond the ninth grade. In fact, in SREB states, roughly 11 percent of students entering the senior year in 2003 did not graduate the following spring or summer. In order to encourage more students to stay in school year by year, schools need to change — some incrementally so as to increase their support of students at risk of dropping out. Others need more fundamental reform, particularly those from which large percentages of students — especially minority students and males — are not graduating.

Develop opportunities for students who are behind their peer group.

States should focus first on developing opportunities for students who are two grade levels behind their peer group. Such opportunities might include awarding an alternative diploma for those who earn the GED credential and employer certification in a career field, as Alabama and Kentucky have done. (See Box 4.) They also might include charter or technical high schools that would offer youth apprenticeships; these programs would integrate academic and career/technical studies in ways that would connect academic and work force skills for these students. These kinds of practices might make it possible to raise the age of compulsory attendance to age 18 and to keep these youth interested in school longer.

Provide flexibility — without lowering standards — for students who struggle to remain in high school.

While states should focus on these and other options for students who are most likely to drop out, they also should provide more flexibility — *without lowering standards* — for those students who struggle day to day to remain in high school. Technology provides one means to give greater flexibility to these students; virtual high schools offering Web-based instruction give students the option to take and retake courses that they need for graduation outside of regular school hours. (See http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/onlinelearning/initiatives.asp.) Schools can even look for other ways to provide flexibility in scheduling without technology, including evening classes. Schools also need to provide more remedial support for students as they undertake courses required for graduation. Some students, particularly those who are parents, need greater social support. (See Box 6.)

Policy-makers must recognize that many chronically low-performing high schools cannot improve without outside assistance. Some districts have placed "coaches" in these schools — experienced educators from outside the district who can evaluate the school's instructional program and work directly with principals and teachers on improving instructional practice. Other districts — and even some states — have organized school leadership teams of district personnel, principals and teachers to address school problems. Some set a three-year time frame for their formal activities so that they have time to develop, carry out and assess their plans. These teams benefit from consultants, coaches and others who help them develop solutions to their problems, and they are able to develop leadership skills necessary to implement their plans. A significant benefit of this approach is the ability of the team members to continue to improve the school even after the team is dissolved.

For some schools, even these kinds of activities are not sufficient. Policy-makers should take the lead in identifying those high schools that need to be reformed or

Box 6

Promising Practices for Making High Schools More Flexible

Using Technology to Deliver Instruction:

Many SREB states now fund a virtual school that provides students with courses required for graduation, delivered over the Web. Virtual schools provide an alternative to traditional classes and help students retake courses on their own schedule. **West Virginia** estimates that approximately 25 percent of the nearly 1,500 students who participated last year in the West Virginia Virtual School (http://virtualschool.k12.wv.us/vschool/) did so to retake a course they had failed. In addition to offering courses to regularly enrolled students, the **Kentucky** Virtual High School (http://www.kvhs.org/) partners with school districts to provide opportunities to complete a regular high school diploma to students who have dropped out (or are on the verge of dropping out), as long as they are under the age of 21.

Through computer-based instruction, Conner High School in Kentucky offers students second chances to complete courses (except mathematics and physical education) that they have failed if they earned a grade within 10 points of passing in their first attempt. Students retake only the portion of the course they failed to pass. From 2002 to 2004, 186 students attempted to earn credit in this "second chance" program, with a pass rate of 82 percent. The high school's graduation rate has been gradually increasing since 1999.

Henrico County Schools (**Virginia**) provides middle grades and high school students and teachers with personal laptop computers for the school year to extend learning beyond the classroom. Students use computers in all classes, on field trips and at home. The initial focus of the laptop program was in history, reading and writing; the superintendent has attributed increased test scores in these subjects to the program. Teachers report that students with disabilities are more focused on their lessons and are more likely to complete their homework. In addition, the superintendent reports that, since the program began, the county has achieved its highest attendance and lowest dropout rates.

Providing Flexible Scheduling:

Laurens District #55 High School (**South Carolina**) allows students to attend "twilight school," starting at 4 p.m. and ending at 7 p.m. Students may attempt courses they have not yet taken and retake courses they have failed. The program has enabled many likely dropouts to earn a regular high school diploma.

Helping Pregnant Students and Students with Children Stay in School:

Texas provides formula-based funds to support schools and districts in getting more teen parents to complete high school. Alvin High School in Texas uses state funds to help students pay for daycare for their children. The graduation rate of teen parents participating in Alvin's program is typically 100 percent.

Establishing Joint Programs with Colleges:

At Southeast Guilford High School (**North Carolina**) students can attend a "middle college" where they take afternoon and evening classes to complete high school graduation requirements and to take college-level work. This program keeps some students in school who have family obligations and who cannot attend normal school hours or who have fallen behind their peer group and are not motivated to stay in a traditional high school. In 2005, approximately 580 students from the county's high schools attended middle colleges, with a high school graduation rate of approximately 98 percent.

restructured and then ensuring that they have the resources they need to make fundamental changes.

Provide outside help to chronically low-performing high schools.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* provides federal guidance and money for helping schools change or restructure. The federal Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program focuses on reorganizing and revitalizing entire schools. The program provides support for schools to implement research-based models of whole school reform, emphasizing academic performance and parental involvement, to help all students meet challenging state performance goals.

Restructure schools that do not improve.

The U.S. Department of Education has identified dozens of nationally available high school reform approaches that meet its "research-based" criterion. Schools receiving comprehensive school reform grants choose the model they believe will work for them. By far the most widely adopted high school-level CSR model in the nation — the choice of nearly 20 percent of all high schools involved in comprehensive school reform in SREB states — is SREB's ***High Schools That Work.*** (See Box 7.) Other CSR models currently used in a number of schools in SREB states include Co-nect, Advancement Via Individual Determination (known as AVID), Talent Development High Schools with Career Academies, and Onward to Excellence II. Schools also have the option to develop a local, homegrown comprehensive school reform model, as long as they can demonstrate that it is based on research.

All of the comprehensive school reform models are based on common themes:

- ***Set high expectations.***
- ***Personalize education plans for students.***
- ***Develop small learning communities.***
- ***Use project-based learning.***
- ***Collaborate among teachers.***
- ***Implement non-traditional scheduling.***
- ***Promote parental involvement.***

In fact, *High Schools That Work* research shows that schools that are successful in both raising achievement and graduation rates are those that implement these practices. States should support these best practices by providing direction and funds to all high schools.

Business leaders are also getting involved in high school reforms as a way to increase the number of qualified workers available and to improve their preparation. They understand that the current education system is not graduating an adequate percentage of students and that many of those who do graduate are not ready for postsecondary education and work force training. Policy-makers and education leaders should foster appropriate relationships with business leaders and corporate foundations so that they can work together to reform high schools — especially those with low graduation rates.

In some cases, business leaders are supporting significant change within traditional high schools. For example, the Environmental and Spatial Technology (EAST) Initiative depends upon local businesses and schools to provide project-based learning experiences focused on community problems. There are 10,000 students participating in these project-based programs nationwide. The businesses provide the technology to enable students to work on their projects. Students choose their projects and direct their own learning with the guidance of a teacher. Local businesses provide technical training to the students to use the required technologies. For example, Mt. Judea High School (Arkansas) students worked with the local fire department to map possible emergency landing sites for helicopters, using geographical information system (GIS) software — and training in how to use it — provided by local businesses. The students were engaged actively in their project, and the maps that the students created significantly reduced the response time for local emergency teams.

Box 7

SREB's *High Schools That Work*: Key Practices

- **High Expectations:** Set higher expectations and get more students to meet them.
- **Vocational Studies:** Increase access to intellectually challenging vocational and technical studies, with a major emphasis on using the high-level mathematics, science, language arts and problem-solving skills needed in the modern workplace and as preparation for continued learning.
- **Academic Studies:** Increase access to academic studies that teach the essential concepts of the college-preparatory curriculum by encouraging students to use academic content and skills to address real-world projects and problems.
- **Program of Study:** Have students complete a challenging program of study with an upgraded academic core and a major.
- **Work-Based Learning:** Offer students and their parents a system planned by educators, employers and employees that integrates school-based and work-based learning and spans high school and postsecondary studies.
- **Teachers Working Together:** Have an organization, structure and schedule giving academic and vocational teachers the time to plan and deliver integrated instruction aimed at teaching high-level academic and technical content.
- **Students Actively Engaged:** Get every student involved in rigorous and challenging learning.
- **Guidance:** Involve each student and his or her parents in a guidance and advising system that ensures the completion of an accelerated program of study with an in-depth academic or vocational/technical major.
- **Extra Help:** Provide a structured system of extra help to enable students who may lack adequate preparation to complete an accelerated program of study that includes high-level academic and technical content.
- **Keeping Score:** Use student assessment and program evaluation data to improve continuously the school climate, organization, management, curricula and instruction to advance student learning and to recognize students who meet both curriculum and performance goals.
- **Promote Initiatives:** Promote state and local policies and the leadership initiatives necessary to sustain a continuous school improvement effort for both academic and career/technical studies.

In other cases, business leaders are encouraging more fundamental changes and are providing funding for new ideas and schools organized on new models. For example, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has made recommendations for high school reform to address the dropout problem. It advocates the creation of small high schools that give students more individual attention and set high expectations. The foundation also sponsors the Early College High School Initiative, which gives students the opportunity to complete high school and two years of college credit simultaneously. Ten SREB states — Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas — have established Gates Foundation-funded Early College High Schools. Three of these — Georgia, North Carolina and Texas — have committed to implementing this approach statewide. The Gates Foundation also advocates a series of actions that states should take to ensure that all high schools are successful. (See Box 8.)

Box 8

Gates Foundation Suggestions for State Action to Improve High Schools

- **Standards and Assessments:** Make sure that they are rigorous, reasonable, performance-based and aligned. Emphasize knowledge and skills necessary for college and careers, using various types of assessments that allow students to make progress and graduate by demonstrating important skills.
- **Accountability:** Focus on academic achievement gaps among groups of students and on gaps in graduation rates among these groups. Provide aid and intervention for school improvement, not just punishments to low-performing schools.
- **Need-Based Funding:** Focus on funding for students with the most need, rather than on the economics of local communities. Use flexibility in how funds can be used.
- **Public School Choice:** Emphasize diverse, small, focused high schools. Make transportation available.
- **College Access:** Create college awareness programs targeting middle grades and high school students, with funding for need-based financial aid.

■ STRATEGY FOUR: ***Communicate key stay-in-school messages to students in danger of dropping out and to their families.***

Media campaigns can connect middle grades and high school students with programs in their communities that help them complete high school and get ready for college. Such efforts are growing in SREB states. These campaigns encourage students to stay in school through graduation and to prepare for postsecondary education.

The media messages attempt to give students a vision of a better life that results from education, to encourage them day by day to remain engaged in their schoolwork and to inform them about funding options. In the language of marketing professionals, these states hope to "brand" the importance of high school graduation and college readiness. States can then apply the brand to a group of programs and messages that all work together to promote higher graduation rates from both high school and college.

Eight SREB states — Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia — use media spots to market "go to college" campaigns aimed at youth. These campaigns carry a strong complete-high-school message as the first step to preparing for postsecondary opportunities.

Texas launched the "Education. Go Get It!" campaign in 2002. It has two key messages aimed at children in elementary school as well as middle grades and high school students. Financial resources are available to students who prepare for and want to go to college. And students need mentors to motivate them, to help them prepare academically and to provide information about college and careers. The campaign has several elements, including television and radio announcements, support for community organizations to help students prepare for college, and restructured counseling and career offices in high school. Both Georgia and West Virginia have adopted elements of the Texas campaign, including the campaign slogan.

Launch media campaigns to promote high school graduation and college attendance.

North Carolina uses the media to bring attention to the comprehensive Web site it launched to help middle grades and high school students prepare for college. (See www.cfnc.org.) Over 600,000 North Carolina students and their parents have set up online accounts. Counselors have access to the accounts to help students and parents with academic planning. Georgia has incorporated elements of the North Carolina campaign in its launch of a Web site that is similar to the North Carolina site. (See www.gacollege411.org.) In Georgia, thousands of students created accounts on the Web site in its first months of operation.

Oklahoma has used media spots as a part of its federally funded Gear Up program to promote the twin issues of high school completion and college readiness. These spots emphasize the importance of taking the right courses and also inform students about the Oklahoma scholarship program.

SREB's Go Alliance

SREB has drawn together these significant efforts into a new regionwide effort: the Go Alliance. Thirteen SREB states already have joined forces to respond to the growing concerns about high school completion. The multistate partnership is helping states develop more effective outreach campaigns — ones that send clear messages to students that emphasize why it is important that they complete high school and prepare for college.

The Go Alliance's first steps have been to provide information on how to run effective campaigns and to gather samples of campaign materials, including planning tools, marketing research expertise, and sample public service announcements. More recently the Go Alliance has partnered with the Pathways to College Network to launch and manage a national Web site on college access marketing. (See www.collegeaccessmarketing.com.)

Challenges Ahead

Few people would have predicted that graduation rates would decline, particularly after the emphasis in the last decades on reading in the early grades and on state accountability systems. These declines should send a powerful signal. States should try more — and different — strategies to keep students in school and help them graduate. Policy-makers, education leaders, business leaders, parents and students should treat high school graduation as a top priority. The *Challenge to Lead* goals are right in saying that society should not give up on young people because of decisions they made before they turn 18 years old, that every student ought to earn a high school diploma, that promoting the GED credential as a last resort does not signal an abandonment of the high school diploma, and that what happens in education will shape what happens in society. SREB states — as well as others in the nation — have to get serious about the importance of high school graduation.

Policy-makers and education leaders who get serious will follow closely the promotion rates of ninth-graders along with graduation rates. They will also see to it that they have strong policies that make a difference in their state, including:

- **an accountability system.** Hold schools and districts accountable for bringing all groups to ambitious graduation targets and ensure that state assessment systems balance high standards and high graduation rates.
- **successful transitions.** Create structured programs in every high school that help students make a successful transition from the middle grades and require schools to create a plan for improving the promotion rate from ninth to 10th grade.
- **intervention strategies for students.** Develop opportunities for students who are behind their peer group and provide all students more flexibility in meeting high school graduation requirements without lowering standards.
- **school improvement.** Provide help to low-performing schools and restructure those that do not improve.
- **media campaigns.** Promote high school graduation and college attendance to potential dropouts and their parents through media campaigns.

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The following reports may be found on the SREB Web site at www.sreb.org.

■ *Challenge to Lead* Education Goals Series

Focusing on Student Performance Through Accountability, 2005.

SREB states face new challenges as they adapt to the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.* This report reviews SREB states' progress in implementing their accountability systems and in improving student performance in all groups. The report documents that many states may not be improving performance at adequate rates to meet the legislation's 2014 deadline. It discusses Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools and includes state profiles of performance data for each state compared with *NCLB* targets.

Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity, 2005.

This report documents the benefits of providing more education for adults who did not complete high school and the urgency of increasing the number of high school dropouts who pursue further education. It focuses on three key indicators of progress: enrollments in Adult Basic Education, GED completion and enrollments of students who earned the GED credential in postsecondary education. Some SREB states have made strides in developing policies and programs for adult learners, and the report profiles their efforts and results. The report offers some promising practices for addressing the adult learning challenge facing SREB states.

Building a Foundation for Success by Getting Every Child Ready for School, 2005.

This report reviews SREB states' progress in getting young children prepared to start first grade ready to learn. SREB states have a long history in this endeavor, particularly in addressing the needs of young children from low-income families. The report documents that this group of children is increasing, profiles SREB states' efforts to meet standards set for high-quality preschool programs and shows how SREB states assess school readiness. The report also addresses health and social services that are available in SREB states to children at risk of not being ready for school.

Creating College Opportunity for All: Prepared Students and Affordable Colleges, 2005.

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals call on states to ensure that many more youth — particularly from minority groups and low-income families — prepare for, enroll in and graduate from college. This means that college must be affordable for these students. This report examines the current affordability gap and what steps could make college a possibility for more young people. It focuses on the need for state-funded financial assistance and ways that states can help prepare a new generation of residents for the future.

Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades, 2004.

This report documents SREB states' progress in getting middle grades students ready for high school. The analyses are based on scores and standards of state achievement tests and on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The report also describes promising practices for preparing middle grades students for high school, based on technology applications that have been implemented in SREB states and on the work of SREB's *Making Middle Grades Work.*

Mastering Reading and Mathematics in the Early Grades, 2004.

This report documents SREB states' progress in getting early grades students ready for the middle grades. The analyses are based on scores and standards for state achievement tests and on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The report also outlines how federal funds for reading programs are distributed to districts and schools, what states are requiring of students who do not meet state standards at the end of third or fourth grade, and what retention and promotion policies states have developed for students who do not meet standards.

Progress Being Made in Getting a Quality Leader in Every School, 2004.

This report documents SREB states' progress in redesigning the preparation and development of school principals. The analyses are based on information collected in interviews with state agency personnel on six key indicators. The report also outlines actions that states can take to make progress on each indicator, describes promising practices being implemented by some states and identifies challenges states face in creating new policies that can drive more effective programs and practices.

Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom, 2004.

Every student deserves qualified teachers, but states do not have enough qualified teachers for every subject in every school. This report documents SREB states' progress toward getting a qualified teacher in every classroom. It highlights the essential policies that SREB states should resolve to develop and to support with adequate resources.

■ *High Schools That Work* Publications

High School Reform Works — When Implemented: A Comparative Study of High- and Low-implementation Schools, 2004.

No school improvement design can be judged until it has been implemented. This research report compares the 2002 *HSTW* Assessment results of the top 50 high schools that have more deeply implemented the *High Schools That Work* improvement design with 50 schools that have done less.

Rigor, Relevance and Relationships Matter in Improving Student Achievement in Rural High Schools, 2005.

This report compares 12 rural Southern high schools with high student achievement with 12 similar schools with low student achievement to determine what makes the difference. Conclusion: Rural students from challenging backgrounds can beat the odds — if their schools use the right practices.

Research Brief: *Project Lead the Way: A Pre-engineering Curriculum That Works: A New Design for High School Career/Technical Studies,* 2005.

This research brief examines the effectiveness of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) at *High Schools That Work* (*HSTW*) sites. It compares the reading, mathematics and science achievement scores of PLTW students with similar non-PLTW students on the 2004 *HSTW* Assessment.

Research Brief: *Raising Achievement and Improving Graduation Rates: How Nine High Schools That Work Sites Are Doing It,* 2005.

Nine *HSTW* schools are succeeding in raising achievement and improving graduation rates. Keys to their success: raising standards, setting challenging goals, giving students feedback and support, engaging students in learning, and involving teachers in school improvement.

Research Brief: *High Schools That Work Follow-up Study of 2002 High School Graduates: Implications for Improving Transitions from High School to College and Careers,* 2005.

This brief reports on how well 2002 graduates believe they were prepared for their pursuits by their high schools and what they thought their high schools should have done differently to improve their preparation for further studies and careers.

The Principal Internship: How Can We Get It Right?, 2005.

This report assesses the quality of principal internships in Southern university leadership programs. It discusses to what extent principal interns are required to observe, participate in and lead activities that focus on improving curriculum, instruction and student achievement and actions for improvement.

Challenge to Lead Goals for Education

1. All children are ready for the first grade.
2. Achievement in the early grades for all groups of students exceeds national averages and performance gaps are closed.
3. Achievement in the middle grades for all groups of students exceeds national averages and performance gaps are closed.
4. ***All young adults have a high school diploma — or, if not, pass the GED tests.***
   - *Greater percentages of students meet state standards on end-of-course tests and graduation tests.*
   - *Percentages of all groups of students graduating with a regular high school diploma increase to above the national averages.*
   - *All groups of students drop out of school at a rate lower than the national averages, according to a common definition.*
   - *More young adults without a high school diploma, 18 to 24 years old, pass the GED tests.*
5. All recent high school graduates have solid academic preparation and are ready for post-secondary education and a career.
6. Adults who are not high school graduates participate in literacy and job-skills training and further education.
7. The percentage of adults who earn postsecondary degrees or technical certificates exceeds national averages.
8. Every school has higher student performance and meets state academic standards for all students each year.
9. Every school has leadership that results in improved student performance — and leadership begins with an effective school principal.
10. Every student is taught by qualified teachers.
11. The quality of colleges and universities is regularly assessed and funding is targeted to quality, efficiency and state needs.
12. The state places a high priority on an education *system* of schools, colleges and universities that is accountable.

The Southern Regional Education Board has established these Goals for Education. They are built on the groundbreaking education goals SREB adopted in 1988 and on a decade long effort to promote actions and measure progress. The new goals raise further the sights of the 16 SREB states and challenge them to lead the nation.

HIGH SCHOOLS THAT WORK

Research Brief

CHALLENGE TO LEAD

SREB

Raising Achievement and Improving Graduation Rates: How Nine *High Schools That Work* Sites Are Doing It

by Gene Bottoms and Karen Anthony

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education, which challenge SREB states to lead the nation in educational progress, include

- All young adults have a high school diploma — or, if not, pass the GED tests.

The number of students dropping out of high school is on the rise. Some believe that increased graduation requirements and high-stakes testing are to blame. However, now is *not* the time to back down from higher standards as graduates need to demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills taught in core academic subjects in order to successfully pursue further education and careers. The answer lies not only in addressing *why* students do not finish high school, but in *how* we can create the kind of supportive learning environment that reduces the number dropping out. **This brief describes the actions employed by nine high schools that are both raising academic achievement and improving graduation rates.**

Key Actions for Raising Student Achievement and Improving Graduation Rates

- **Raise standards and provide an opportunity for students to learn a rigorous and relevant curriculum of academic and career/technical studies.**
- **Help students set challenging goals, give feedback on their status in achieving these goals and provide support needed to achieve the goals.**
- **Use instructional strategies that actively engage students in learning challenging content.**
- **Involve teachers in a continuous school improvement initiative.**

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High Schools That Work (*HSTW*) asked state directors of career/technical education to recommend schools that were making progress on raising student achievement and holding more students in school through graduation. Recommended schools were expected to have shown marked improvement over the past three years in achievement on various measures, including graduation rates and promoting power.[1] After reviewing local, state and *HSTW* data, *HSTW* staff chose nine schools and conducted extensive telephone and e-mail interviews with the principals and other school leaders to determine what they were doing to meet this dual goal.

The nine schools are in seven states: Kansas, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and West Virginia. Three schools are in small towns or rural areas and six are in large towns or inside major metropolitan areas. Enrollments range from 400 to 1,300 students with four of the schools having more than 1,000 students. Three high schools have at least a 35 percent minority student population, with the highest being 56 percent. Four schools have at least one-third of their students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunches, with the highest being 50 percent.[2]

Opportunities to Learn a Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum

Compared to similar high schools, these nine schools with increased achievement and graduation rates have more deeply implemented the *HSTW* recommended academic core, higher graduation requirements and higher classroom expectations than have other high schools. In most instances, these schools have higher graduation requirements than their respective states. Further, more students at these schools are provided opportunities for in-depth study in high-demand career/technical fields, academic fields or both. Combined resources give students access to quality career/technical studies at school sites, regional career/technical centers, community or technical colleges and employers through apprenticeship programs.

Eliminating Low-level Courses

All nine schools reported having eliminated many sections of low-level courses from the core areas of English, mathematics, science and social studies so that more students are taught at a college-preparatory level. When compared to all other schools in the *HSTW* network, these nine schools have significantly more students completing two or three areas of the *HSTW*-recommended curriculum.[3] According to the 2004 *HSTW* Assessment results, 62 percent of students from these nine *HSTW* schools have completed two or three areas of the *HSTW*-recommended curriculum, compared with 45 percent at all other network schools. (See Table 1.)

Table 1
Percentages of Students Completing the *HSTW*-recommended Curriculum at Nine *HSTW* Schools Compared with All Other *HSTW* Schools

	Percentage of Students Completing No Areas or One Area	**Percentage of Students Completing Two or Three Areas**
Nine *HSTW* Schools	38%	62%
All Other *HSTW* Network Schools	55	45

Source: Special analysis of 2004 *HSTW* Assessment data
Note: Differences in the percentages between the two groups are [illegible] based on the [illegible] test.

1 Promoting power, developed by Johns Hopkins University, is a rough measure of the [illegible] dividing the number of seniors enrolled in a high school by the number of freshmen enrolled [illegible]

2 Data on enrollments, minority population and free/reduced [illegible] from the [illegible] Educational Statistics Common Core of Data.

3 *HSTW* recommends that all students take four [illegible] assignments monthly and a research paper annually, four college-preparatory mathematics [illegible] II and geometry, and three college-preparatory courses in science.

Further, in 2004, students at these nine *HSTW* schools outscored students at all other *HSTW* schools by 12 points in reading, 10 points in mathematics and 15 points in science. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
2004 *HSTW* Assessment Mean Scores of Nine *HSTW* Sites and All Other *HSTW* Schools

	Mean Reading Score	Mean Mathematics Score	Mean Science Score
Nine *HSTW* Schools	289	309	306
All Other *HSTW* Network Schools	277	299	291

Source: Special analysis of 2004 *HSTW* Assessment data
Note: Differences in the means between the two groups are significant at the $p \leq .01$ based on the t test.

As a group, these schools also showed strong improvement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced *HSTW* Assessment between 2002 and 2004, gaining 10 points in reading, six points in mathematics and 10 points in science. (See Table 3.)

Table 3
Improvement in Mean *HSTW* Assessment Scores between 2002 and 2004 at Nine *HSTW* Schools

	Mean Reading Score	Mean Mathematics Score	Mean Science Score
2002	279	303	296
2004	289	309	306

Source: Special analysis of 2004 *HSTW* Assessment data
Note: Differences in the means between the two groups are significant at the $p \leq .01$ based on the t test.

Aligning Courses to State Standards

Several of the schools completed an extensive curriculum alignment process designed to ensure that students are taught and tested at a level equivalent to their respective state exams. Scott Daugherty, principal of Brookside High School in Sheffield, Ohio, described the school's efforts: "We met as department teams to map our curriculum and to establish agreement on course content — what to teach, how to teach it and how to assess it — so that the material correlates with strands on the Ohio Proficiency Test."

Vicki Ron, English Department chair at Garden City High School in Garden City, Kansas, reported that when faculty examined the school's English curriculum closely, they found it featured mostly novels and short stories. The state's reading test, however, contained almost exclusively expository selections, such as essays, speeches, newspaper/magazine articles, directions, etc. To address this, teachers added expository reading to their English curriculum and are helping students overcome some of the difficulties with this type of text.

Raising Graduation Requirements

All nine schools have raised standards above what their respective states require for graduation and they continue to be successful in increasing graduation rates. Students in these schools get the message that their school leaders and teachers have high expectations. In 2004, significantly more students at these nine schools, as compared to all other *HSTW* sites, reported experiencing a moderate to intensive emphasis on high expectations; literacy across the curriculum; challenging and engaging mathematics curriculum and instruction; challenging and engaging science curriculum and instruction; and timely guidance.

Four schools — Hancock County High School (Lewisport, Kentucky); Paint Valley High School (Bainbridge, Ohio); Shawnee High School (Shawnee, Oklahoma); and Oak Glen High School (New Cumberland, West Virginia) — **increased the number of mathematics credits required to three credits beyond Algebra I.** Paint Valley High School now requires four credits of mathematics and five credits of English after implementing a two-part required senior seminar course with an emphasis on getting students ready for college-level mathematics and writing. Teachers not only work with students on their required senior projects, but also take time to discuss college and help them with applications for admission and financial aid.

At these schools the message to students is clear — high school is important to their futures. These school leaders believe *all* students can master rigorous materials; in fact the more rigorous the courses, the better prepared students will be for further education and careers. Because school leaders and teachers convey to students that high school is important and that each student is worthy of being taught to high standards, they are able to raise standards and increase graduation rates.

Set Challenging Goals and Provide Support to Achieve Goals

High schools both raising achievement and graduation rates have more deeply implemented the *HSTW* recommendations for guidance and advisement. These recommendations help students and their parents set personal goals and provide feedback at critical transition points — middle grades to high school and high school to postsecondary studies. Throughout the high school years, parents and students are kept informed of how well the students are doing and what they need to do to stay on track to achieve their goals. This process of goal-setting and review tends to motivate students to work harder because they relate high school success with future success. Special transition activities at grades nine and 12 allow guidance counselors and advisers to address major deficiencies and to provide continuous support throughout high school to help students pass more challenging courses, to re-take failed courses and pass high-stakes exams.

Smoothing the Transition from the Middle Grades to High School

Because school leaders at these schools are addressing the high failure rates in ninth grade, they have placed an intensive focus on the transition from the middle grades to high school. Many students enter ninth grade unprepared to do high school work so these schools have set up ways to identify and help these students catch up during this pivotal year. Six schools rely on standardized test scores from the middle grades, particularly eighth-grade test results, to help them determine which students will need the most help. Others evaluate students after their first marking period (usually three to four weeks) in ninth grade and schedule them into tutorial-type classes if they are struggling.

Five of the nine schools use double-dosing to help struggling ninth-graders strengthen their skills in mathematics and English/language arts. Double-dosing involves a semester-long catch-up course aimed at getting students ready to take Algebra I or ninth-grade English/language arts in the second semester.

Mount Pleasant High School in Texas has a large Hispanic student population; it requires *all* English-as-a-second-language students to participate in special double-blocked classes of English I and II and Algebra I, called the Tiger Academy. Principal Susy Wynn said: "Our data show that our double-dosing approach is really helping increase our state assessment scores for *all* students, but particularly for our Hispanic students." **Since beginning double-dosing in 2002, the school has seen a dramatic drop in Algebra I failures — from 47 percent in 2002-2003 to 25 percent in 2003-2004.**

Three schools have freshman centers or academies that allow all ninth-graders to remain together with the same teachers throughout the day. Schools reported that these teacher teams work together to plan integrated lessons to reinforce each other's instructional objectives. In addition to its comprehensive guidance program, Shawnee High School pairs incoming ninth-graders with upperclassmen and community members who serve as tutors and mentors. The school's guidance staff examines students' standardized test scores from the fifth through the eighth grades to identify areas in which incoming ninth-graders might have difficulty.

High school leaders realize that helping students succeed in ninth grade involves working with middle grades leaders. Two schools, Shawnee High School in Oklahoma and Oak Glen High School in West Virginia, have worked with middle grades leaders and teachers to address what students should know and be able to do upon entering high school and to incorporate those essential skills into the middle grades curriculum. Oak Glen High School has focused on mathematics from fifth through ninth grade to ensure that students are prepared for higher-level mathematics when they reach high school. Both schools have meetings between middle grades and high school teachers to discuss state standards, course content and assessments.

These nine *HSTW* schools are not satisfied to simply retain low-performing, struggling students in ninth grade until they eventually drop out of school. Instead, they are committed to using the ninth grade to help students catch up and get started on a path of success in high school. These schools are reversing the trend of a growing ninth-grade bulge[4] and convincing students that doing well in school is important to their futures.

Developing an Extensive Extra-help System and Recovering Grades or Credits

Leaders at these schools understand that students are much more likely to graduate if they can stay on track to graduate with their peers. They use extra help and credit recovery not to water down standards, but to help students catch up and meet the same high standards as their peers. They are tireless in their efforts to provide opportunities for students to catch up and remain on grade level. **All nine school leaders described extra-help systems using varying methods of instruction (e.g., peer-led, teacher-led, computer-assisted) and held at appropriate times to meet differing learning styles and schedules.** Three schools have policies requiring students with grades below a C to attend mandatory extra-help sessions available during the school day, before and after school, and on Saturdays. Other school leaders said that while they could not technically *require* that students attend extra help, they were expected to and most did.

Students in some states must pass an exit exam to graduate from high school. Of the nine schools, only one is in a state with a required graduation test. Mount Pleasant High School has developed a system of extra help specifically designed to help students pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). The school's first step is identifying students' weaknesses before they actually take the test. Four times during the year, the school administers benchmark exams that measure students' progress in each area of the TAKS test. Students who are below standards are required to attend special tutorial classes designed to catch them up to grade level. Further, Mount Pleasant requires all students who have failed any portion of the TAKS to take a special TAKS remedial class during the regular school day. If students pass the TAKS in the middle of the school year, they can take an elective course the next semester. In addition, the school runs four special Saturday sessions required for students who need to retake the test.

4 The ninth-grade bulge refers to the disproportionate number of students enrolled in ninth grade compared to the number enrolled in eighth grade the previous year. The bulge is a function of rapidly increasing ninth grade failure rates.

For those who fail classes and need to make up credits, eight of the nine schools offer extensive opportunities for students to recover credit, catch up and graduate on time. These schools realize that once students fall behind their peers because of course failures, they are likely to lose the motivation to finish high school. Schools' approaches vary, but include Saturday school, night school, summer school and computer labs, in which students work at their own pace and teachers are readily available for individual assistance. Other schools use a combination of a traditional summer school approach with night school and Saturday school also available in some core academic areas.

At Paint Valley High School, guidance counselors refer juniors and seniors who are credit-deficient to a special tutorial program. By attending sessions either during the day or after school, students can often earn credit in failed courses and graduate with their peers. The school also participates in a countywide virtual academy, which allows students to make up courses through online instruction.

These nine high schools not only provide options for students to pass failed courses and exams, but three schools also have absence "buy back" programs in which students can recover days missed in excess of the allowable absences. Students can have excessive absences for a variety of reasons, including illness, pregnancy and family responsibilities, among others. At schools with absence buy-back policies, school leaders believe that students should have a second chance to make up missed days, especially if they faced serious difficulties that interfered with their ability to attend school. Shawnee High School and Mount Pleasant High School hold an absence-recovery Saturday school several times a year to allow students to make up a full day of school. Southeast Guilford High School in Greensboro, North Carolina, has a slightly different policy. **Principal Keith Kremer explained, "For their first three absences, students are required to make up missed classwork. However, for each additional day missed, they are also required to complete one tutorial session for each missed class."**

Pairing Students with Adult Mentors/Advisers

These school leaders understand that each student needs a personal relationship with an adult who can help the student set goals and develop a planned program of high school study to reach those goals. Consequently, they have developed extensive guidance programs to help each student set and achieve goals for high school and beyond. Compared with students from other schools in the *HSTW* network, the responses of seniors from these nine high schools on the 2004 *HSTW* Student Survey showed that significantly more students had richer guidance experiences.

Principals from most of the nine schools cited their small-school or family atmosphere as a key component in retaining students. They believe individual attention and relationships with caring adults are essential. Six of the nine schools have an adviser/advisee program in which each student is assigned to a teacher adviser who mentors him or her throughout high school. In the high schools with a ninth-grade academy, only the ninth-grade teachers work with freshmen; when students become sophomores, they are assigned new teacher advisers for grades 10 through 12.

School leaders using this type of one-on-one guidance program agree that it makes a real difference to students, and enhances teachers' and guidance counselors' abilities to monitor student progress. Hancock County Schools (West Virginia) Assistant Superintendent Suzan Smith said of the adviser/advisee program at Oak Glen High School, "We put our adviser/advisee program in place to have a more direct connection with students. Being assigned to a small group of students to mentor throughout high school allows our teachers to provide ongoing support and encouragement to students. In particular, we feel this is helping to lower our dropout rate because students build relationships with teachers whom they trust."

Another advantage of the teacher adviser guidance program is that teacher advisers act as a referral service and set up meetings with the guidance counselor or other teachers when necessary. At Paint Valley High School in Ohio, every four weeks the teacher adviser receives interim progress reports for each student he or she advises. If a student is failing a course or his or her grade has dropped significantly, the teacher adviser contacts parents and works with the teacher to schedule extra-help sessions. Most school leaders described the teacher advisers as a "first responder" team for students; in many cases, guidance counselors work with too many students to give the individual attention needed. This kind of small-group advising makes it much harder for students to fall through the cracks.

Eight of the nine schools hold parent/student meetings with the guidance counselor before ninth grade to plan the student's four-year high school program of study. The counselor, parent and student meet each year to review the plan, check for any missing credits and schedule the next year's courses. Five schools make a strong effort to meet with eighth-graders — either by having guidance counselors visit the feeder middle grades schools to meet with students and their parents or by scheduling a day to bring eighth-graders into the high school. By working with eighth-graders the year before high school, counselors begin building relationships with the future freshman class and help students know what to expect in high school. Hancock County High School hosts a special day for eighth-graders to visit and meet the principal and guidance counselor. Eighth-graders also have a question-and-answer session with current freshmen that culminates with a sundae party. Prior to the start of their freshmen year, the students are invited back again with their parents to meet all ninth-grade teachers and tour the school.

Principals at these nine high schools stressed that administrators, faculty and staff together take responsibility for student learning and success. They also realize the importance of involving parents in the process by keeping them informed of students' progress. Consequently, school leaders recognize that monitoring and reporting students' grades to parents are essential. At the mid-point of each grading period at two of the schools, Brookside High School and Oak Glen High School, the principal calls the parents of *all* students with failing grades. Three other schools send home progress reports regularly, and one has an online system for checking grades. Using the Internet, parents can log on with a password at any time to view information on students' grades, attendance and discipline infractions. Schools also reported using e-mail, newsletters and hometown newspapers to communicate with parents.

When asked what they believe is most responsible for improved graduation rates, school leaders shared a variety of answers, **but their major emphasis is on keeping a close watch, particularly on at-risk or struggling students, to make sure they advance and do not fall behind their peers. Garden City High School and Southeast Guilford High School use grant money to hire specialists to work with at-risk students.** At Garden City High School, a social worker closely monitors student attendance. If a student is habitually absent, the social worker visits the student and his or her parents at home to discuss why the student is not coming to school. The social worker then tries to provide reasonable alternatives to dropping out and helps the student obtain any assistance needed. When the student returns to school, the social worker continues to work with the student by checking grades and attendance often and providing individual counseling.

Formalizing a High School to College and Career Transition Initiative

The proof of the effectiveness of the guidance and career/technical programs at these schools is that students really see connections between high school and future goals. All nine have done a good job of building college-to-career connections. On the 2004 *HSTW* Annual Site Progress Report, five of the nine schools (55 percent) reported increased percentages of graduates attending postsecondary institutions, compared with 24 percent of schools across the network. In fact, Paint Valley High School Principal Dwight Goins reported that since beginning a senior seminar that combines getting students ready for college-level mathematics and English/languages arts with extra support for applying to college, the percentage of graduates pursuing postsecondary studies has doubled — increasing from 35 percent to 70 percent in just four years.

Some of the schools' efforts to help students build bridges from high school to further learning and careers include offering dual enrollment courses at area colleges, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, distance-learning courses, work-study programs and programs leading to professional licensure. To help ensure that students are adequately prepared for college, Corbin High School teachers participate in a special "P-16 council." The council brings together high school teachers and college professors who meet to evaluate course standards and to determine if the standards are challenging enough to prepare students for college-level work. Responses on the 2004 *HSTW* Student Survey revealed that more students at these nine schools, as compared to all other *HSTW* sites, had earned 10 or more college credits by the time they graduated from high school. They achieved this by taking AP courses, community or technical college classes, and joint enrollment courses in high school.

Some high schools have used college opportunities to reach out to struggling students. At Southeast Guilford High School, students can attend a special program called Middle College. This program offers afternoon and evening classes in which students complete credits to meet high school graduation requirements and then progress to college-level work. The school has found that this works well for students who have other obligations, such as working to support a family or for those students who have fallen behind their peers and are not motivated to stay in a traditional high school. Principal Keith Kremer said, "In the Middle College program, students are treated more like adults, and they feel more personally responsible for continuing their education. It is their decision to stay, but we help them take ownership of that decision and be accountable for it."

Engage Students in Learning Challenging Content

High schools that raised achievement and completion rates did more than other high schools to support their teachers in learning research-based teaching strategies and applying them in their discipline areas. Such strategies include ways to engage students in reading and writing for learning in all courses. These schools, more than other schools, made greater use of technology in classroom instruction and in providing extra help, credit recovery and access to Web-based courses not offered by the school.

Providing Quality Career/Technical Experiences

Some students need to see a direct connection between doing well in high school and being able to get a good job when they graduate in order to be motivated to continue with high school and take it seriously. These utilitarian-oriented students benefit from a quality career/technical program that both prepares them for the workplace and maintains a high standard of academic study. Speaking of the role that career/technical classes can play in keeping students in school, former Oak Glen High School Principal George Danford, now the county career/technical director, said, "This year I see some of the same students who were in high school last year when I was principal. The difference is that this year, they are at the career center and it is like a light has been turned on. Now they see a purpose and relevance for high school; they are much more motivated."

These nine high schools continue to develop high-quality career/technical programs. Five of the principals spoke of their efforts to add programs in information technology. Garden City High School offers a program in broadcasting that gives students real-life production experience as they create a daily television broadcast for their fellow students. This program is the only one of its kind in the state, and some of its graduates have gone on to careers in broadcasting and media technology.

Other schools have upgraded the content of existing programs, and now offer industry-certified programs in such areas as auto mechanics and welding. Students at seven of the nine schools have access to an area career center that offers a wide array of programs. Students at Southeast Guilford High School can complete programs in agriculture, drafting, health careers and auto-body repair at their home school. They can also attend the area career center that offers more costly programs, such as heavy equipment repair and operation. School leaders believe that providing quality career/technical courses enables students to gain the skills they need to be successful in college and in the workplace.

To encourage students to pursue postsecondary studies, five schools have dual credit programs in career/technical courses. Students who participate earn college credit either by attending courses at a local technical college or by taking advanced classes in high school. The credit for the advanced classes is accepted by colleges that have articulation agreements with the high school.

As a part of planning for high school and beyond, five schools have organized career pathways or majors, and all students must choose a broad career field by the end of ninth or 10th grade. Mount Pleasant High School's career pathways began as a part of its career/technical program, and now every student chooses a pathway. Last year, the school published a book that describes the different career pathways in all areas of specialization, details the courses students need to take, and describes the postsecondary degree or credential required for that job. Principal Susy Wynn stated that this process helps students choose their electives wisely so that they complement the students' educational and professional goals. Oak Glen High School has a similar program that requires students to participate in work-based learning experiences that relate to their career majors.

School leaders stressed the need to have high standards for all students. Many spoke about their efforts to improve the career/technical curriculum by encouraging teachers to plan interdisciplinary lessons between career/technical and core academic classes. They judge that this not only results in higher quality student engagement, but also reinforces academic content by showing students how certain concepts are applied in the workplace. Kaelee Hogan, guidance counselor at Garden City High School, said, "One reason our career/technical students have such high scores on the *HSTW* Assessment is that they complete the same graduation requirements as everyone else."

Students need to see meaning in their studies. At Mount Pleasant High School, students are engaged in projects that have real-life significance and relate to real-world jobs. The principal described an annual project in which students work together to build a three-bedroom house. Students from construction and drafting classes and those from different mathematics courses all have a part in its design and construction. When it is finished, potential buyers bid on the house at auction.

Mount Pleasant has strengthened the relationships between what students learn in the classroom to what employers expect in the workplace by holding advisory board meetings three times a year in which business people, community members and teachers meet to examine the high school's career/technical programs. The discussion and feedback help school leaders make decisions about the content of programs, teaching methods and course offerings.

Training Teachers to Help Students Become Independent Learners

These nine schools provide a supportive environment for teachers to help them learn new ways to teach students more effectively. They provide professional development opportunities for teachers, and hold attendees accountable for sharing what they learn with the rest of the faculty through faculty meeting presentations, in-service days and demonstration classrooms. These schools do a good job supporting new teachers through a variety of mentoring programs. Brookside High School actively participates in Ohio's teacher mentoring program. Each first-year teacher is paired with a veteran teacher who provides guidance, observes the new teacher and gives feedback on teaching style and classroom management. At least twice a month, the principal meets with all first-year teachers to discuss their successes and any difficulties they are experiencing.

Quality professional development programs result in higher quality teaching and more engagement in the classroom. The responses of seniors from these nine high schools on the 2004 *HSTW* Student Survey showed that they had more intensive literacy, numeracy and science experiences in the classroom than students from other sites in the network. In fact, eight of the nine schools are in the process of implementing or have implemented literacy across the curriculum that requires reading and writing in *all* courses — not just in English/language arts. At Shawnee High School, teachers in all classes require students to complete writing assignments, and they use a schoolwide rubric for grading writing assignments. Periodically, teachers bring examples of student writing to staff meetings to examine the quality of work students are doing and to make sure that teachers in all classes are using the rubric and grading similarly.

At Hancock County High School, students are required to complete summer reading assignments and write papers about what they have read. Corbin High School in Kentucky has adopted a focus on reading and writing across the curriculum and holds department meetings each month to discuss and share new strategies. Oak Glen High School implemented a writing-across-the-curriculum initiative. In all career center courses, students complete writing assignments every Friday in which they explain the content standards covered that week in class and discuss how this material relates to their career paths. Oak Glen teachers have been pleased with the results because the writing assignments help ensure that students understand the material and the teachers believe that writing about the content standards has helped reinforce student learning.

Using Technology to Advance Student Achievement

The principals and other school leaders at these nine schools use a variety of technological tools in their efforts to advance student achievement. (See Table 4.) On the 2004 *HSTW* Annual Site Progress Report, all nine schools reported that their faculty and administration had been provided with professional development to learn how to integrate technology into the instructional process. Schools use computer programs for both tutorials and retaking courses, and all but one school reported extensive use of computer software for extra help in reading, mathematics and science courses. Three schools primarily use computer-based programs for credit recovery. These programs are often available at various times of the day and after school and are popular with students because they can choose when to attend and can move at a comfortable pace.

Table 4
Use of Technology at Nine *HSTW* Sites

	Number of Schools
Provide professional development on how to assist students with technology	9 of 9
Provide professional development on how to integrate technology into the instructional process	9 of 9
School maintains a Web site for important communications for school and community use	9 of 9
School's Web site is used as a repository for instructional resources	5 of 9
Students use computer-based extra-help programs	8 of 9
Students use Internet for research	9 of 9
Students earn credit through online distance learning classes	6 of 9

Source: Special analysis of 2004 *HSTW* Annual Site Progress Reports

Paint Valley High School offers a virtual academy that students access online. Each course has a posted syllabus with lesson plans and assignments. Students use e-mail to send completed assignments to the teacher and take tests online when they have finished a unit or course. Students do not have to pay fees to take courses and they can receive full credit. The advantage is that students work on missing credits outside the typical school day -- even from their own homes. Because the virtual academy is countywide and staffed by nearly 70 teachers, it can offer students a wide array of courses. Similarly, students at five other schools also have access to online distance learning courses for which they can earn credit. Corbin High School's students can take courses not available in the building through Kentucky's virtual high school and the school's video conference center.

All nine schools maintain school Web sites that are used to communicate pertinent information to faculty, students, parents and the community. Five schools indicated on the 2004 *HSTW* Annual Site Progress Report that they use their Web sites as repositories for instructional resources.

Involving Teachers in a Continuous School Improvement Initiative

High schools both raising achievement and high school completion rates benefit from strong district and school leadership support that encourages the schools to remain active participants in the *High Schools That Work* network. **These nine schools specifically cited the *HSTW* Goals and Key Practices as the foundation for the changes and progress they have made.** School leaders at Oak Glen High School also credited a supportive and progressive board of education led by a superintendent who is a strong believer in *HSTW*. Principal Susy Wynn of Mount Pleasant High School described her school's involvement in *HSTW*: "We are very innovative and everything we do is geared around the *HSTW* Key Practices for improvement. We constantly seek out new ideas and we obtain many of them from our visits to other *HSTW* sites." All nine schools are active members of the network, and four have sent a school team to the *HSTW* National Staff Development Conference for at least the past two years. Others have participated in *HSTW* national workshops and in state- and district-level conferences.

Many schools have put into place the type of school teams that *HSTW* recommends for developing curriculum and examining student work. Teachers at Southeast Guilford High School meet weekly in subject-area focus groups to look at student work to make sure that they are grading to the same standards. Teachers and the principal examine lesson plans to make sure they follow curriculum and content standards. Some of the results of this effort have included the development of pacing guides for students in English classes.

How Will States Know They Have Effective Strategies in Place to Raise Achievement and Improve Graduation Rates?

States will know when:

- high schools make improvement on key achievement indicators and increase the percentages of students who enter grade nine and graduate four years later.
- each high school has an effective middle grades to ninth-grade transition program.
- each high school has an effective extra-help system that assists students in passing courses and high-stakes exams, and in earning credits for failed courses to stay on track to graduate with their peers.
- all students have advisers to help them and their parents plan high school programs of study and to help them get the assistance they need to meet course standards.
- students have access to high-quality career/technical studies.
- students can earn postsecondary credit toward a degree and pass a national employer certification exam.
- all students can read and write across subject areas and know how to apply study skills to become independent learners.
- high schools and postsecondary institutions formalize initiatives that facilitate the transition from high school to college and careers.
- schools use technology to help students pass courses and retake courses failed, and give access to students outside of school hours.
- schools receive support to be active participants in a school improvement network that places emphasis on achievement and school retention.

What Can States and Districts Do to Raise Achievement and Improve High School Completion Rates?

Based on the experience of these nine *HSTW* sites, there are several actions that states and local school districts can take to raise graduation rates and improve student achievement. These actions are:

- **Have at least 85 percent of students complete a rigorous academic core.** Provide all students with access to either an academic or career/technical concentration. The academic concentration could be with a mathematics, science or humanities focus or with a career/technical focus with at least four courses in a planned career sequence.
- **Engage the faculty in aligning the high school curriculum — academic and career/technical — to essential academic standards that prepare students for further study and careers.** This includes aligning teacher assignments, daily lesson plans and classroom assessments to standards.
- **Provide *all* students access to the same rigorous academic core.** Convey to all students that they are worthy by enrolling them in challenging courses, assisting them to set goals beyond high school, and providing them with mentors and the extra help they need to meet course standards.
- **Adopt scheduling that enables students to earn 28 to 32 Carnegie units so they can retake courses and yet stay on course to graduate with their peers.**
- **Provide *all* teachers continuous in-depth training to engage students in reading and writing for learning and to use strategies that develop students as independent learners.** Have *all* teachers, especially those in grades nine and 10, plan weekly lessons that include at least one reading and writing strategy and at least one study skill strategy.
- **Provide site-specific training for mathematics and science teachers aligned to their disciplines.** Training for these teachers should include having students use technology and work in groups to solve real-world problems, use hands-on materials and other research-based strategies that advance their mathematics and science achievement.
- **Assign school leaders who are skilled in engaging faculty in continuous school improvement to high schools with chronic problems.** Reallocate resources to the ninth grade and attain a student to teacher ratio for this grade level that is less than or equal to that for grade 12. Use only the most experienced and best teachers as instructional leaders of teacher teams at grade nine.
- **Have school boards set goals for improving both achievement and high school completion rates and require schools to report annually on their progress.** These annual reports would include what was tried, what worked, what did not work and what special initiatives are planned for the following year to improve achievement and completion rates.

This publication is supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the *HSTW* State Vocational Educational Consortium. The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of any of the funding entities, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Exhibit B

The 10 Exceptions to the New FHSAA Transfer Rule In-Brief

1. A student, upon entering the ninth grade, applies to a school or special program (public or private) and is denied admission because there is no vacancy. Later, there is an opening in the school and the student transfers there at first opportunity.

2. A student applies for, is accepted and transfers at first opportunity to a school (public or private) that offers a special program that begins in a grade subsequent to the ninth.

3. The student transfers from a failing school to a better performing school (public or private) at first opportunity.

4. A student is ordered to attend a different school by the district school board. The student can attend the public school he/she is ordered to attend, a public school not under the jurisdiction of that school board or any private school.

5. A student relocates to a different community or school zone to live with different individuals because of a domestic hardship. The student can attend any public school he/she is permitted to attend in the new community or any private school.

6. An emancipated student relocates to a different community or school zone to establish a self-supported household. The student can attend any public school he/she is permitted to attend in the new community or any private school.

7. A student is ordered by a court to relocate to a different community or school zone. The student can attend any public school he/she is permitted to attend in the new community or any private school.

8. A student who attends a private school is no longer able to afford that school because of a financial hardship. The student can transfer to a public school or another private school that is more affordable.

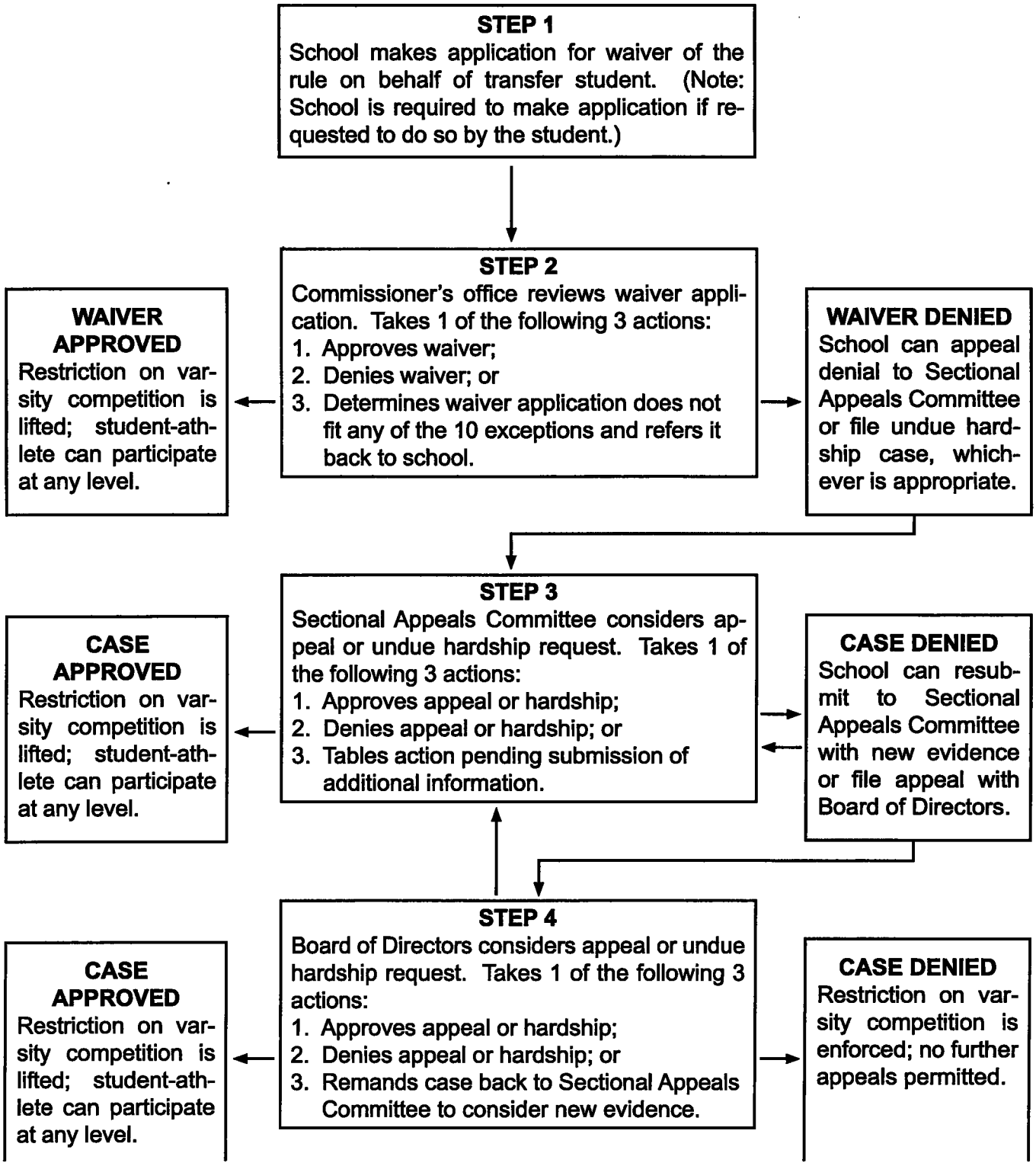
9. A home-educated student participates as part of a home education cooperative that dissolves or otherwise ceases to exist. The student can transfer his/her participation to another home education cooperative, or a public or private school.

10. A student transfers from one member school (public or private) to another member school (public or private) and the principals of both schools agree and acknowledge that the move is in the best educational interest of the student, is not motivated by athletic or disciplinary reasons and no evidence of recruiting exists.

These 10 exceptions apply only to the Commissioner. They establish the parameters within which he/she must operate in considering waiver applications. These limitations do not apply to sectional appeals committees or the Board of Directors, both of which are empowered to waive any FHSAA eligibility rules whenever they deem it to be appropriate.

Exhibit C

FHSAA Due Process Procedure for Waiver of Restricted Eligibility Under New Residence & Transfer Rule



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SOUTH FLORIDA SUN-SENTINEL | THURSDAY | NOVEMBER 17, 2005 | SECTION C

HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMING

Foreign influx rankles some

BY SHARON ROBB
STAFF WRITER

FORT LAUDERDALE• When the FHSAA Swimming and Diving Finals begin Friday, it will resemble an Olympic meet.

From as far away as Kuwait and Slovakia, foreign swimmers have been changing the face of high school swimming in South Florida as 23 countries are represented in all three classifications on public- and private-school teams.

The student-athletes have been flocking to South Florida for coaching and facilities the past few years.

They have been coming here for the year-round temperate weather and the lure of college scholarships.

They have been breaking meet records and qualifying for state meets.

And along the way they have taken up prime spots on high school swim teams.

The diversification on the pool deck has

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Where: Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex, 501 Seabreeze Blvd.
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Parity in the pool?

SWIMMING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1C

sparked a heated debate among coaches and parents on whether the influx is good for the sport.

Some parents have expressed concern that the students are taking spots away from local kids.

There is no question high school swimming has improved since foreign swimmers started training in South Florida but, many ask, at what price?

Cypress Bay is the most improved boys' team in Broward this season and is among the Class 3A team favorites. The team has benefited from the addition of South American swimmers whose families live in Weston. Cypress Bay coach Robert Caragol said more than 50 percent of his swimmers are from other countries.

It started a minor controversy earlier this season when rumors that the Cypress Bay swimmers were too old to swim high school and were not year-round residents started circulating. FHSAA and school officials said the swimmers' paperwork and visas were in order. But it was enough to fuel the debate.

"For people who say that, it takes things away from our kids here," Caragol said. "They need to understand that this is not just a high school thing, but it's a world thing. This is a great beginning for our high school athletes to understand that this world is very competitive and this is the land where we have so many opportunities."

American Heritage in Plantation, Pine Crest, St. Thomas Aquinas and other private schools attract the most foreign swimmers because of visa rules that favor them.

Private schools can issue I-20 forms certifying that the student meets academic and financial requirements. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service then issues a one-year F-1 visa that must be renewed every year.

Public schools that do not have the same finances or resources are relegated to taking only those athletes in their district or who decide to attend a magnet program. The only way for a foreign student not in private school to obtain an F-1 visa is if the family lives here or through a student exchange program, which is costly.

Some of the foreign swimmers' families have lived in the United States for several years, but many have not.

While those who have expressed concern are loath to be quoted with their complaints, there are plenty of coaches who lambaste the criticism of the international stars.

"Let's not point the finger at international athletes racing against our Americans," John I. Leonard coach Gordon Andrews said. "Any coach that whines because of international swimmers would be the first coach to accept one with great swimming prowess. I sense some sour grapes out there."

Stephanie Eisenring is from Switzerland.

Kuwait has several members of its national team at Plantation's American Heritage, including Abdulrahman Al-Bader, one of the top seeds in the 100-yard breaststroke and 200 individual medley, and Nawaf Haidar, seeded fifth in the 100 butterfly in the Class A meet.

Pine Crest has been attracting swimmers from around the world for years. At one point when the program had on-campus dorms, like Jacksonville Bolles, Pine Crest was the state powerhouse.

Junior Sabina Sinska of Pine Crest is one of the top seeds in the girls' 200 freestyle for the Class 1A meet. She competes for Slovakia internationally.

"Most of these parents come here because they believe the education and opportunities that are here for their children are better than in their home country," Pine Crest coach Jay Fitzgerald said. "What makes the U.S. great is that we accept everyone and try to give everyone an equal chance and not just for swimming."

Freshman Stephanie Eisenring of Pompano Beach makes her state 1A meet debut in the 50- and 100-yard freestyles. She was born in Switzerland, a country not known for its swimming, and competes for a public school not known for its aquatics program. She is a member of the Swiss junior national team and trains with Pine Crest's club team.

"They say the foreign kids take the spots away from our American kids, that's bull . . . our kids just have to work a little harder," Coral Glades coach Michael Lohberg said. "We have always had foreign kids with us because they learn and inspire each other. I just don't think it's fair the private schools have a totally unjustified advantage over the public schools just because of a flaw in the system and money."

Two of the greatest success stories this season are Cuban-born swimmers Joey Pedraza of Pine Crest and Manuel Rabelo of John I. Leonard, both top seeds in their specialty events and favored to win state titles.

Rabelo is a member of one of the area's strongest public school programs. He has helped to attract other minority swimmers. Both had to overcome the language barrier and adjust to a new school and sports system before they could think about swimming.

"When my family first came here [through a lottery] it was very hard . . . people look at you as an outsider, but everyone wants to come to America because this is where you have opportunity," Rabelo said. "I feel I have to work twice as hard but it is worth it. I love my school, I love my team and I love my swimming. This country gave me a second chance."

Sharon Robb can be reached at srobb@sun-sentinel.com.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE

These are the countries that will be represented at this weekend's state meet: Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Germany, Jamaica, Korea, Kuwait, Phillipines, Poland, Puerto Rico, Slovakia, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Virgin Islands.

IF YOU GO

When: Friday-Saturday.
Where: Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex, 501 Seabreeze Blvd.
Admission: $7 per session, $4 heat sheets and programs.
Schedule today: Optional practice for all three classes, 2-5 p.m.
Friday: Coaches' meeting (boys diving), 8 a.m.; coaches' meeting (swimming), 8:30 a.m.; boys' diving warm-up, 8:30-11 a.m.; boys' diving competition (all classes), 11 a.m.; swimming preliminaries (all classes), noon-4 p.m.; girls' diving open practice (after completion of boys' diving competition), 3:30-5 p.m.
Saturday: Coaches' meeting (girls' diving), 8 a.m.; girls' diving warm-up, 8:30-11 a.m.; swimming finals warm-up (all classes), 10:30 a.m.-noon; girls' diving competition (all classes), 11 a.m.; swimming finals (all classes), noon-4 p.m.
Of note: Hurricane Wilma took its toll on South Florida swimmers. The ratio of Central/North Florida swimmers to South Florida swimmers is 5-1. "The hurricane did leave its mark," Coral Glades coach Michael Lohberg said. . . . The 3A region meets turned out to be the toughest. The 16th seed in 3A in most cases would be a top 8 seed in the 2A meet.
2004 champions: Class 3A girls — St. Thomas Aquinas. Class 3A boys — St. Thomas Aquinas. Class 2A girls — Satellite Beach. Class 2A boys — Jacksonville Bishop Kenny. Class 1A girls — Jacksonville Bolles. Class 1A boys — Jacksonville Bolles.

— SHARON ROBB

INTERNATIONAL WATERS: Al-Abdeen Qali Zain, who was a senior last year, senior Nawaf Haidar and junior Marzouq Al-Salem, all from Kuwait, helped American Heritage-Plantation strengthen its team. Staff file photo/Lou Toman

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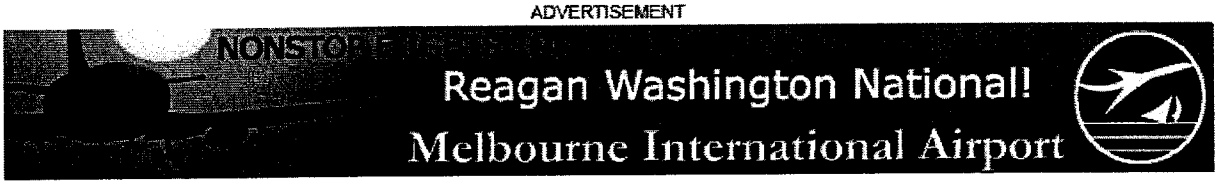

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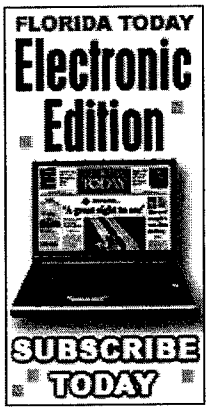

Mike Cherry came to FLORIDA TODAY in July 2005 and is covering high school sports. A Marshall University graduate, Cherry has spent 20 years as a sports reporter and arrived from the Charleston (W. Va.) Daily Mail. An Ohio native who grew up in New Jersey, he is the possessor of one of the ugliest serves in tennis. He writes a weekly high school sports column.

December 7, 2005

Florida Air has trouble finding foes

ADVERTISEMENT


Aw, there's always an asterisk.

Perhaps one should still at least acknowledge the fact that one Brevard County public high school, West Shore, plays private Florida Air Academy in boys basketball. In fact, West Shore plays Florida Air twice.

Yet, a further glance at the Falcons' schedule reveals a telling asterisk next to those dates. West Shore has to play Florida Air. They are in the same Class 3A district.

No other public school in this county gets a shot at the Falcons, who are unbeaten and did not lose last season in winning the 3A state title. One of the toughest times of Florida Air's year is the offseason, when coach Aubin Goporo puts together his next schedule.

In fact, just two other Brevard schools will meet Florida Air this season. Melbourne Central Catholic plays the Falcons twice. They share district affiliation. Brevard Christian plays Florida Air late next month.

This is an old problem for Florida Air, which one recent season could scrape together only four home games. The publics do not want to face Florida Air for several reasons. They range from the Falcons' proficiency to a multi-national roster that is a potential disaster for a careless copy editor.

"It's not easy," Florida Air athletic director Jim O'Malley said of schedule-making. "It's not much of a difference other than the travel."

What O'Malley means is the Falcons still play public schools -- just not from Brevard. Saturday's home game with Gainesville power Buchholz could be Florida Air's toughest regular-season test.

One Brevard basketball coach recently said coaches at his school are not permitted to schedule any of the in-county private schools. An easy out, of course, is for someone to murmur the "r" word in regard to a private school. You know, something about attempts to procure

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talent from outside natural geographic or demographic regions.

Seems like wasted big-game opportunities.

"It would be nicer if we could play some of the local schools, but it's not a nuisance," O'Malley said. **More games to play.** And you thought Palm Bay ended its football season just because it fell to Niceville two weeks ago in a 5A regional final.

Well, Pirates are traveling throughout Florida -- and one is flying three time zones away -- in the next month to play in all-star games.

Three Palm Bay players -- Jared Goodson, Chris Cook and Quinton Banks -- are playing Saturday in the Central Florida East-West game at Sanford. Cook will later participate in Florida's North/South game at The Villages. On Dec. 16, eight Pirates will represent the South in the annual Brevard North-South all-star game that will be played at Cocoa.

A defensive end/linebacker, Goodson is the one going multi-state. He heads west with his coach, Dan Burke, to be part of the Florida/ California bowl game that will be played at Cal State-Fullerton's stadium. Burke will coach Florida's offensive line. Goodson and Burke will depart for Southern California on Christmas Day. **A true feat.** Here is proof that each new day can bring something you never before experienced.

Last week in the FLORIDA TODAY sports section, the roundup of high school soccer games from the previous day included an impossible statistical feat (feet). Called in to this department were two players from the same team each credited with a half-goal.

Everyone thought they would stop at half-sacks.

Contact Cherry at 242-3684 or mcherry@flatoday.net

Past Columns

- **Smaller schools having big seasons**
- **Kiwanis tourney set to tip off**

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Florida Air Academy at a glance:

Coach: Rodrick Lawson (2nd year)
Offensive formation: Multiple
Class/District: 2B/7
Defensive formation: 5-3
Last year's record: 6-3

POSITION	PLAYER	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	CLASS
Top returning letterman				
RB/LB	Lavour Addison	5-10	219	Sr.
LB	Bryce Ashline	5-10	170	So.
RB/LB	Felip Blaze	5-11	205	Sr.
QB/DB	Marion Booth	5-8	165	Jr.
LB	Brett Carlton	5-10	180	Sr.
DB	Krishun Coward	5-9	170	Sr.
DL	Trumaine Gibson	5-7	210	Jr.
OL	Alex Grossman	6-2	230	So.
QB	Matt Joyce	6-3	163	Sr.
OL	Billy Lewis	6-0	205	Jr.
TE/DL	Meko Major	6-2	225	Sr.
RB	Umar Merritt	5-8	160	Fr.
WR/DB	Maurice Moore	5-9	170	Jr.
DB	Shola Ogunlan	5-10	185	Sr.
QB	Miles Price	6-1	162	Sr.
LB	Joe Smith	5-11	185	Sr.
OL	Scott Vance	5-9	210	Sr.
WR/DB	Temiko Wilson	5-8	180	Sr.
Key newcomers				
RB/LB	Paul Baker	5-10	195	Sr.
OL	Brian Bell	6-0	195	Jr.
OL/DL	Michael Blanfort	6-4	260	Sr.
DL	George Capote	5-11	215	Sr.
K	Danny Donahue	5-8	155	So.
TE/LB	Justin Frazier	6-2	210	Sr.
LB	David Googe	5-10	185	Jr.
RB/LB	Jeramie Harley	6-0	190	Sr.
OL/DL	Patrick Kennedy	6-2	190	Sr.
RB/LB	Johnnell Lang	5-11	175	So.
WR/DB	Sherman Lang	6-0	175	Sr.
DL	Andre Lewis	5-9	245	Jr.
OL	James Longman	5-10	205	Sr.
QB	Andrew Malchoff	5-11	155	So.
WR/DB	Mark Martin	5-10	160	Fr.
DB	Spencer McGuire	5-11	175	Sr.
OL	Kyle Platt	6-1	280	Sr.
LB	Angelo Russo	5-11	175	Sr.
OL	Gary Smith	6-0	215	So.
K	Myles Teizer	6-0		Jr.
QB	Grant Tyner	6-0	175	Sr.
OL	Sebastian Wright	6-3	245	Sr.
OL	Austin Zibbel	6-0	215	So.
K	Brandon Zizzo	5-8	155	So.

1 – 17 new upperclassmen

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The Florida Times-Union

August 25, 2005

No.7-ranked junior transfers to Apaches

By JEFF ELLIOTT
The Times-Union

One of the nation's top-rated junior high school basketball players has enrolled at Arlington Country Day and will likely play a key role for the Apaches, who will attempt to defend their Class 2A state championship.

Herb Pope, 6-foot-8, 233-pound power forward who played last year at Aliquippa (Pa.) High School, is slated to replace Sammy Hernandez in ACD's starting unit. Hernandez, a first-team all-state selection as a senior, signed with George Mason.

Pope is ranked No.7 among the nation's high school juniors in RivalsHoops latest listing of the top 100 prospects in the 2007 class. He averaged 17 points per game and about 14 rebounds last year as a sophomore.

Arlington Country Day is Pope's fourth high school in three years. He attended Montrose Academy in Washington, D.C., as a ninth grader and enrolled at Hopewell (Pa.) at the start of his sophomore year before transferring to Aliquippa.

As late as six weeks ago, Pope denied rumors that he was going to transfer again.

"Most definitely I'm staying [here]," Pope told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.

A year ago, Pope led Aliquippa to the WPIAL Class AA finals, where the Quips lost to Beaver Falls in triple overtime. Near the end of the season, Pope made a verbal, non-binding commitment to attend Pittsburgh after he graduates.

"Herb has registered here and was in school the first day of classes," ACD coach Rex Morgan said. "Right now, he's just trying to get adapted.

Arlington Country Day last season won the first state basketball title of its nine-year existence. The Apaches finished 28-3 and were ranked among the top 10 prep teams in the nation by USA Today and Student Sports Services.

Two local high school juniors have also transferred to Arlington Country Day: Devon Lamb, who averaged 20.6 points a game at White last season, and David Swann, Fernandina Beach's leading scorer at 16.7 points per game.

jeff.elliottjacksonville.com, (904) 359-4292

This story can be found on Jacksonville.com at http://www.jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/082505/hig_19589566.shtml.

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GORDON CHEVROLET • ORANGE PARK

Monday, November 26, 2001

Last modified at 10:55 p.m. on Sunday, November 25, 2001

Hoop transfers the latest trend

One coach calls it 'rent-a-player'

By Bryan Mullen
Times-Union sports writer

The reason behind transfers is either good or bad.

But it can be quite ugly for the schools who use them.

Transfers have become commonplace in recent years on the Jacksonville area boys basketball scene, and whether the transfers are legit or shady, one thing is clear: coaches can no longer count on having one player from his freshman to his senior years.

"A college coach can have a player he knows will only be there for a year before he goes to the NBA," said Wolfson basketball coach Bruce Rosebrock. "The same thing happens in high schools right now. Coaches don't know if their better players will be back the following season."

Added Nease coach Bud Beech: "Certainly there's been a lot more transfers happening recently."

Nease gains Bolles transfer T.J. Paterick -- one of the top junior point guards in the state -- to complement senior standout Chet Stachitas, a two-time Times-Union All-Area first-team selection and St. Joseph's signee.

While there's nothing illegal about Paterick's transfer (his family has lived in Ponte Vedra Beach, which falls into Nease's zone, through his

high school years), others are questionable.

Former Wolfson and Jackson standout Antonio Lawrence, one of the top senior prep players in the nation, transferred to San Joaquin Catholic in California before this season. It is the 14th school he has attended in 14 years. San Joaquin Catholic is being investigated because of an influx of transfers that have come to the school.

"The loyalty is non-existent now," Rosebrock said.

Rosebrock has seen his share of transfers. Two years ago, three of his starters who were a part of a team that made it to the Class 5A state title game the year before -- including Lawrence -- transferred to Jackson High School. Before last season, J.D. Bracy, now a Florida State player, transferred to Wolfson before transferring back to his former high school Kissimmee Osceola. In 1996, Udonis Haslem, now a University of Florida star, transferred from Wolfson to Miami Senior.

When Haslem was a senior at Miami Senior, the Florida High School Activities Association stripped of the program of its state title and banned the school from postseason play because of recruiting violations.

"If you go by the letter of the [FHSAA] law, I believe 75-percent of the transfers that take place have guilt written all over them," Rosebrock said. "It's turning into rent-a-player. The school in California has basically rented Antonio Lawrence for a year."

While some notable transfers took place in Jacksonville entering this boys basketball season, none are being investigated by the FHSAA. Eric Lasan, who led the area in scoring and rebounding last season, transferred from Paxon, a public school, to Trinity Christian, a private school. It's a common occurrence and one that is not typically frowned upon.

"I've had kids who have played for Nease for one or two years then transfer to Bolles," said Beech. "And that's fine. There are schools in the area which offer [academic] programs where students see opportunities."

Four of Flo Davis' players saw some opportunities. Three of the Clay High School coach's starters from last season transferred to Arlington Country Day, a private school ranked No.12 in the nation by USA Today. Another transferred to Orange Park, a public school.

"Students transfer for the right and the wrong reasons," Davis said. "But you have to do it for the right reasons. Not for better uniforms or more press. I try to take the high road and coach the players we have to the best of my ability. Great teams can be bought, but greater teams can be built with hard work."

The Jacksonville area has followed the national trend. Most transfers take place when a student's family moves into a new district, but others involve magnet programs and other school system initiatives that allow students to attend schools well out of their zones.

Doug Huff, national rankings editor of studentsports.com, said state associations like the FHSAA are leery about going after suspect transfers because they may be sued.

"It's [transfers] really picked up during the past seven or eight years," said Huff, who has also ranked boys high school basketball teams for Street and Smith since 1975. "It's a situation where the kids say they have the freedom to go wherever they want."

But in the end, the coaches who lose players can only do so much.

"What can you do?" long-time Ribault coach Bernard Wilkes asked. "My contention is, if a kid doesn't want to play for me, then fine. I'll send him on his way and wish him good luck. Life goes on."

Staff writer Bryan Mullen can be reached at (904) 359-4567 or via e-mail at bmullen@jacksonville.com.

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Baniulis has FAA shooting for title

BY BARBARA CAYWOOD
FLORIDA TODAY

MELBOURNE - When Florida Air Academy basketball coach Aubin Goporo met Evaldes "Evka" Baniulis for the first time, he had only one question for the lanky 16-year-old from Lithuania.

"I didn't know he was the coach," Baniulis recalls. "He came up to me and didn't even say hi. The first thing he said was, 'Can you shoot?' I said, 'Yeah sure, I'm a basketball player. Of course I can shoot.' "

If Goporo had any doubts about the shooting ability of one of the newest members of the 2003-04 Falcon basketball team, they were put to rest the first time he saw the youngster in the gym.

"When I saw him shooting, he had perfect form," said the fifth-year FAA coach, who will lead his team into the Class 3A state semifinals against St. Petersburg Catholic today at 2:30 at The Lakeland Center.

No one who witnessed Baniulis' stunning 43-point performance in the regional final win against Eustis last week would doubt him either. His 11 3-pointers (on 11-of-18 shooting) might be a one-game record of some sort.

But it shouldn't be a major surprise. For the season he has 97 3-pointers, is shooting 44 percent from outside the arc and is averaging 16 points per game, second best on the team.

Ironically, the 6-foot-7 junior from Vilnius didn't consider himself a long-distance shooter back home.

"In Lithuania, I was only a mid-range shooter," he said. "Usually, I was an inside player who shot layups and rebounded. But shooting has always been my favorite thing and it's a natural thing. My dad (Remigijus) is a very good

He's a shooter. Florida Air's Evka Baniulis enjoys shooting and it shows. The Falcons junior guard sank 11 3-pointers in Saturday's region final and has hit 97 for the season. Tim Shortt, FLORIDA TODAY

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PHOTO GALLERIES:
FAA 78, Eustis 52

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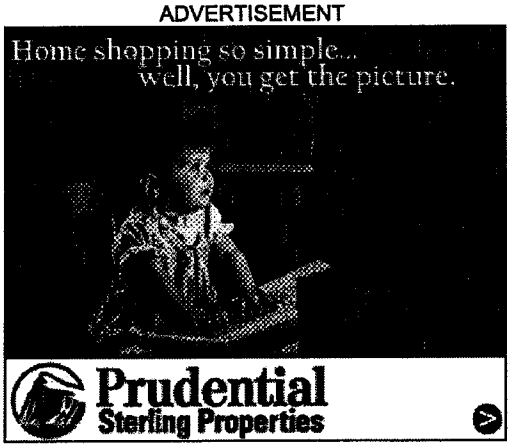
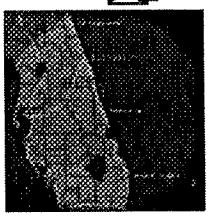


Today's game
- **What:** State semifinals
- **Who:** Florida Air vs. St. Petersburg Catholic
- **When:** 2:30 p.m.
- **Where:** The Lakeland Center
- **Up next:** State finals set for Friday

The matchup
St. Petersburg Catholic"Barons"
- **Coach:** Mike Moran (fifth year, 116-34)
- **Record:** 24-5-1.
- **Ranking:** Honorable mention
- **Final four appearances:** 2 -- 1973 (lost in semifinals); 2004 (lost in finals to Cocoa Beach).

StartersPG -- Jock Sanders, 5-8, so., 2.8 ppg., 1.8 rpg., 3.9 apg. **G** -- Aaron Holmes, 6-5, jr., 25.5 ppg.,

Weather 62°F



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Dad and mom (Renata) sent young Evaldes to basketball school when he was 8 years old. In Lithuania, he explains, basketball school comes after regular school and consists of about a two-hour practice.

He played for a year, then quit.

Following a dream

6.7 rpg, 4.2 apg. **G** -- Grady Jorgensen, 5-10, jr., 7.5 ppg, 3.2 rpg, 2.1 apg. **C** -- Billy Tapp, 6-5, jr., 10.7 ppg., 10.4 rpg., 3.0 apg. **F** -- Joey Baker, 6-7, sr., 10.0., 7.3 rpg., 2.7 apg. **Florida Air Academy** "Falcons"

- **Coach:** Aubin Goporo (fifth year, 135-12.
- **Record:** 30-0.
- **Ranking:** No. 1
- **Final four appearances:** 4 -- 1998 (Champions); 2001 (Champions, 31-0); 2002 (lost in finals); 2004 (Champions, 29-0). **StartersPG** -- Jerome Burgos, 6-0, so., 4.1 ppg, 1.8 rpg., 7.2 apg. **G** -- Walter Hodge, 6-0, sr., 25.2 ppg., 2.2 rpg., 4.2 apg. **G** -- Evka Baniulis, 6-7., jr., 16.0 ppg., 5.7 rpg., 1.5 apg. **G/F** -- Markus Agee, 6-3, jr., 6.7 ppg., 7.3 rpg., 1.1 apg. **F/C** -- Greg Washington, 6-9., sr., 5.6 ppg., 7.2 rpg., 0.8 apg.

"I was being lazy and thought it was not for me," he said. "And my back was weak so I started swimming for a year to strengthen my back. Then I came back and broke my collarbone and was out for six months. But when I came back after that, I had no more serious injuries and I was in basketball for good."As he reached his ninth-grade year in school and his basketball skills continued to escalate, Baniulis decided it was time to pursue his dream.

"I always had the desire to go to the U.S.," he said. "To me it was a dream country. In Lithuania, there is a man who helps people like me get to the U.S. He has a son who lives in the U.S. and checks out the prep schools and boarding schools. I ask him to find the best school for me. He said there are a lot of schools I can find for you to go to, but this school (Florida Air) has the best coach.

"My dad wanted me to leave because he knew I would have more chances to improve myself and more opportunities for what I can do after school (college). My mom, of course, she worried about me like all mom's do, but she agreed. It wasn't hard for me to leave because I knew I was going to learn."

The first thing he had to learn was to speak English. It was a subject he took in school in Lithuania from "grade of seven" but managed to pretty much ignore.

"I didn't learn anything," he said. "Well, I knew some basic words, but not enough to speak with people. I could speak Russian perfectly and of course, Lithuanian, but not English."

At FAA, he was put in a dorm room with a cadet from Russia and two from the U.S.

As a student, he has a 4.0 grade point average and a new attitude about languages.

"Now I'm learning English and Spanish," he said. "I want to learn as many languages as I can. But, his favorite subject is math and he thinks he "kinda wants to be a lawyer -- or an economist."

Of course, what he wants to do right now is win state -- and shoot.

"Shooting is my favorite thing," he said. "Last year (even though he was a starter as a sophomore) I wasn't much about shooting because I knew the game was all about Sasha (Kaun) and Walter (Hodge). I was getting to know American high school basketball and get comfortable with it."

Now, he's comfortable and he's encouraged to shoot -- from way out there -- by his coach and teammates.

"He's a smart player," Goporo said. "He knows how to get open for his shot."

He also has that shooter's instinct.

"The very first shot," he said, "tells me everything."

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Subject: RE: Need copy of column
Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 4:54 PM
From: Brousseau, David <DBrousseau@sun-sentinel.com>
To: 'Laurel Ring' <lring@fhsaa.org>

TIME TO STOP THE HOP

STEVE GORTEN ON HIGH SCHOOLS

The shopping needs to stop.
You know, the annual -- and sometimes semi-annual -- events where high school athletes and their parents search for the best athletic situations and buy into the idea they'd be better off at another school -- academically, of course.

The Florida High School Athletic Association referred to this type of transferring as "school hopping" and "free agency" in its conceptual changes earlier this month, the first step toward instituting a much-needed transfer rule. That rule would force junior and senior transfers, with few exceptions, to sit out one year before participating in varsity sports.

It would be better if freshmen and sophomores were included in the changes. Still, it's progress. Unfortunately, if a new rule does go into effect, it won't be until July 1, 2006 at the earliest. A proposal must be approved at a June meeting before it can go on the agenda for a January meeting.

"I totally agree with it, I just wish it would be implemented earlier than next year," said Coral Springs Athletic Director Diane Sanzari, a member of the FHSAA board of directors. "It would do away with athletes and parents shopping themselves around."

If it passes, there will be no more cases like former John I. Leonard running back Damian Sims, who attended four different high schools in four years.

In Broward County, many elite athletes have switched schools, some more than once.

Soccer standout Taylor Fuentes went from American Heritage to Western, then back to American Heritage. Softball pitcher Angel Shamblin transferred from Hollywood Christian to Westminster Academy to Hollywood Hills to Hollywood Christian, where she graduated last year.

Quarterback Brent Schaeffer, currently suspended from the University of Tennessee team, bounced from St. Thomas Aquinas to Dillard to Deerfield Beach.

Wonder how the landscape of Broward football would have changed if Tyrone Moss hadn't left Coconut Creek for Ely?

This transfer rule will help "level the playing field," Sanzari said.

She predicts it will be "both popular and unpopular" -- popular with the teammates of gifted athletes, unpopular with those always looking for the best opportunity to showcase their talents.

"Hopefully, people will think twice," Sanzari said. "It won't eliminate

[transfers], but it will definitely ... "

She paused, searching for the right words.

"People aren't just going to be able to make those changes off the cuff anymore."

COLLEGE BOUND

McArthur forward Michael Ford, a South Florida Sun-Sentinel All-County selection and Broward County's leading rebounder as a senior, signed with Pasco-Hernando Community College in New Port Richey.

South Plantation softball pitcher Ali Altieri signed with BCC while football players Darius Charlton and Darryl Linton did so with Husson College in Maine.

Also, St. Thomas defensive back John Induisi signed with Pace (N.Y.) University, where he'll also compete in track, and Cooper City pitcher Gary Kahn signed with Grinnell College in Iowa. ...

Dillard guard Erica Brown was named a second-team Parade All-American.

Steve Gorten can be reached at sgorten@sun-sentinel.com.

-----Original Message-----
From: Laurel Ring [mailto:lring@fhsaa.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2006 4:43 PM
To: Brousseau, David
Subject: Need copy of column

Dave,
Can you get me a copy of Steve Gorten's column from April 12, 2005: "Time to Stop the Hop"? Would be ever so grateful...;-)
--
Laurel Ring
Communications Coordinator
Florida High School Athletic Association
(352) 372-9551 ext. 350

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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Christy Cabrera Chirinos

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Transfer policy needs teeth

Published January 24, 2006

It's the dirty little secret that isn't really a secret.

Transfers happen. And no matter how many parents will say the moves are made for academic reasons, we all know that isn't always true.

There is fierce competition for college scholarships, and parents know a good player on a good high school sports team has a much better chance for exposure than, say, a great athlete on a not-so-stellar team. So what happens? Sometimes, Mom and Dad start shopping for a better "experience."

The transfer situation has gotten out of control with some athletes playing varsity sports for two, three or even four different high schools. Today, the Florida High School Athletic Association will have the opportunity to do something; it will vote on a proposal that would limit a student's ability to bounce from school to school.

It's about time.

The proposal being considered will force athletes to miss a year of varsity play if they transfer schools without a change of residence during their high school career. If a student does transfer schools without moving, they'll be forced to play sports at a "sub-varsity" level ... think junior varsity.

The state is allowing provisions -- it's not fair to punish a student whose parents move or who had to leave a private school and enroll in a public school because of a change in financial circumstances.

But the biggest challenge for the FHSAA will be backing this policy if it's passed. Some parents will challenge the state and hire lawyers to keep their children on the field. The legality will be tested.

If the state can pass and enforce the new regulations, coaches and athletic directors such as Bill Caruso of Cypress Bay will have a system they can be proud of.

"The bottom line is, do [FHSAA officials] have the guts to back it up?" Caruso asked. "If they back it up, I'm all for it. I think it's a shame that some kids have played at four schools in four years. It's wrong."

Hopefully, that will stop.

On their way

More of Broward's top high school football players have made oral commitments as Signing Day approaches. Deerfield Beach lineman Mike Blanc committed to Auburn, while Pompano Beach's Myron Lewis, a first-team All-County selection, committed to Vanderbilt.

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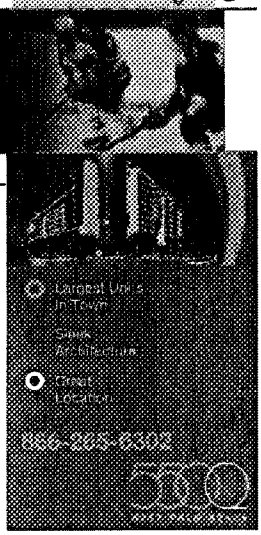

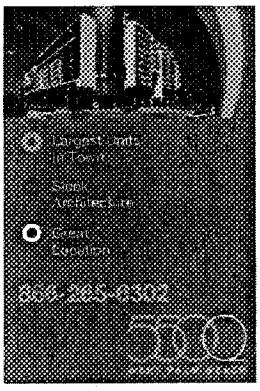

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Western standout Jarred Corey has chosen Villanova and teammate Joe Krissel is headed to Pennsylvania. Fort Lauderdale quarterback Matt Johnson, also an All-County selection, orally committed to Bethune-Cookman. Another All-County selection, Boyd Anderson quarterback Herb Bynes, committed to Hampton University. Former Boyd Anderson standout Eric Wilson is headed to Rutgers.

Sarah Quinlan, a Cypress Bay sweeper, committed to William & Mary.

Surprise, surprise

The field for this year's girls' BCAA Big 8 has been announced, and two of the county's traditional basketball powers won't be at South Plantation. Dillard, the defending Class 5A state champion, and Deerfield Beach, the Class 6A state runner-up, didn't qualify for the tournament.

Christy Cabrera Chirinos can be reached at ccabrera@sun-sentinel.com.

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The Florida Times-Union

January 29, 2006

Hilliard strategy: Foul 'em

By JEFF ELLIOTT
The Times-Union

During the opening 30 seconds of a Jan.6 basketball game against Hilliard, Josue Soto saw an opening down the lane and made his move.

But before the Arlington County Day senior guard could reach the basket, two Hilliard players converged on him and knocked him to the floor.

It was a sign of things to come.

Hilliard coach Randy Smith wanted to send a message, and it wasn't that his team likes rough play. Smith doesn't like the unlevel playing field that exists between nationally ranked private school ACD and the restrictions of rural-based Hilliard.

Smith isn't happy that the Apaches jet to exotic tournament sites such as Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass.; wears Nike-sponsored uniforms; and consistently lures top players from other Jacksonville-area programs. Standouts Devon Lamb and David Swan transferred to ACD this fall after banner seasons at White and Fernandina Beach, respectively, last year.

The Apaches are 19-3, ranked No.1 in this week's Class 2A state poll and No.23 nationally.

At Hilliard, it's not the same. Four players -- including Daniel Thomas, the area's leading scorer at 20.9 points per game -- quit the team during the holidays, a little more than one week before it hosted ACD.

So when principal Dale Braddock said he heard the Apaches would "run the score up on us," due in part to Hilliard casting the deciding vote that had District 8-2A members play each other twice instead of just the once that ACD had favored, Smith decided to take a stand.

The eight Flashes players who dressed for that Jan.6 game began fouling ACD players from the opening tip. In addition to the foul on Soto, Hilliard committed six other first-minute personals -- one of which sent 7-foot-3, 260-pound Apaches center Jason Bennett to the floor. In a little more than 10 minutes, Flashes players were whistled for 33 fouls.

With 5:21 to play in the second quarter, referee Craig Till had seen enough. With one player injured and four others fouled out, Hilliard was left with just three available players. Citing a high school rule that affords the referee to prematurely end a game, Till made such a call.

"The rule allows an official to call the game when the coach or players are making a travesty of the game," Till said. "That was the determination that we [officials] made. We couldn't allow for the game to continue for safety concerns for ACD players as well as Hilliard players."

Smith has refused public comment on the game. He did agree to talk with the Times-Union but asked that the conversation be kept private. However, the Times-Union obtained from the Florida High School Athletic Association a four-page letter that Smith sent to FHSAA commissioner John Stewart with an explanation of his strategy.

"My team was playing the No.1 team in the state of Florida ... and they have 12 of the finest athletes that could be found on their team from all over the U.S. I will say nothing further of his players, and how they arrived at ACD," Smith wrote. "However, in preparing for our game with them, I had to keep the safety and well-being of my team in mind both from a physical and psychological standpoint.

"Entering the second quarter, we had a player sustain an ankle injury, now we are down to seven players. I cannot refuse to play or finish the game. I do know, however, that it is an unsafe environment for my players to be in for what amounted to another 24 minutes.

"In short, knowing we had to play the game under the conditions that existed ... I simply wanted to end the game as quickly as I could under the rules as I understood them. It was not my intent to injure any player on ACD's team or to dishonor a game I hold great love and passion for. I simply wanted my team to be able to exit the floor as soon as we could do so."

One colleague says Hilliard boys basketball coach Randy Smith, shown during Saturday night's game, is an excellent tactician. ----------

Concerns abound

While Smith explained his actions for wanting to end the game quickly, he didn't address his team's play during the first quarter. A game tape obtained by the Times-Union shows that Hilliard players fouled on every ACD possession, other than when the Apaches had a fast break or could get off a shot before being fouled. On offense, the Flashes continually took 3-pointers, often shooting shortly after crossing the halfcourt line and never making an attempt to run any plays.

Soto, a 6-foot guard who has signed to play for Florida State, said he and his teammates were surprised and concerned.

"I was concerned about getting hurt," said Soto, who was knocked to the floor on two other occasions after sinking 3-point baskets. "All they wanted to do was hack us as soon as we got the ball. Who knows how far they were going to go with that?"

Smith's course of action wasn't endorsed by his fellow District 8-2A coaches. But the coach of 30 years has the support of Hilliard's principal.

"Coach Smith did what he thought he had to do, and that was to abbreviate the game and keep them from inflating the score and demoralizing our kids," said Braddock, who attended the game. "When I saw [what

was happening], I knew he was trying to abbreviate the game. I don't condone it, but letting them run the score up and demoralizing our kids would probably upset me more."

The FHSAA didn't treat the matter lightly when it received a copy of what Stewart called "a very disturbing report" from Till. The commissioner sent a letter to Braddock, informing him that the school would be fined $250, citing a FHSAA Handbook edict that states, "The premature termination of a contest by an official due to unsportsmanlike conduct by student-athletes, coaches, other personnel ... shall be a minimum fine of $250."

Braddock said Smith paid the $250 fine with a personal check, which is school policy.

Stewart also wrote: "Please share our concern with your basketball coach regarding the contents of this report. Please be warned that any future demonstration of unsportsmanlike conduct by Hilliard High School will result in applicable penalties."

Hilliard, which is 3-13 after Saturday night's 47-42 victory over Bishop Snyder, refused to play ACD on Jan.24 in the second game of the home-and-home series, saying it never received a signed contract back from the Arlington school. The FHSAA declared the game a 2-0 forfeit for the Apaches but didn't penalize Hilliard further.

Ironically, the schools could meet in the semifinals of the District 8-2A tournament hosted by Hilliard in two weeks. If the Flashes defeat Bishop Snyder again in a game between the Nos.4 and 5 seeds, they next would encounter the top-seeded Apaches.

Different perspectives

None of Smith's District 8 colleagues endorsed his decision to prematurely end the game.

"I don't know that what Randy did made sense to me," said Bishop Snyder coach Lou Periera, a friend of Smith's for several years. "I think what he wanted to do was shorten the game, although that wouldn't have been my thought.

"What I told our kids when we played ACD was we would shorten the game by taking time off the clock. We're so overmatched against them, we had to do that. ACD pressed quite a bit, but I never felt they were trying to run the score up on us.

"As a coach, it's your responsibility to give the kids every opportunity to win as long as it's within the rules of the game. I'm not in Randy's situation there, and I know he's in a tough situation, but I would have gone about it in a different way."

Providence coach Jim Martin said Smith is one of the top tacticians among area coaches.

"Over the years, he's played us as well as anybody because he studies tapes of opponents so well," said Martin, whose team dealt Hilliard 33- and 42-point defeats this season. "I think he puts more time in studying us and coming up with strategies than anyone. He beat us a couple years ago when we had a top club by matching up so well against our top people and forcing our non-shooters to take the shots."

Bob Mitchell, who's in his first season at University Christian, said his first reaction to Smith's tactics was to chuckle.

"ACD is outgunning everyone, and what Randy did is a unique strategy. It didn't seem to make much sense, but I saw a little humor in it," Mitchell said. "I wouldn't choose to do that. You go out and play to the best

of your ability. If you get stomped, then you get stomped. I've lost games by 70 before. You put it behind you and move on."

ACD coach Rex Morgan has administered 70-point defeats on teams before, but he said he never purposely ran up a score or tried to humiliate an opponent.

"I wasn't going to try and run the score up in that game. For someone to suggest that, that's total B.S.," Morgan said. "We were pressing when we were up by 20, but it was only three minutes into the game. I've got some of my young kids in the game, trying to get them some minutes and experience in a game-type situation.

"What happened in that game really concerned me from a safety factor. I thought there was one time when they went after Jason's legs, his knees, and that really bothered me."

Braddock is so concerned about the unlevel playing field between ACD and Hilliard that he plans to petition the FHSAA for independent status in basketball next year. He says Hilliard would like to keep scheduling games against Providence and Bishop Snyder, but not ACD.

"We just want to level it out a little bit," Braddock said. "What happened in that game was nothing he [Smith] wanted to do, but I think he felt that to

get attention to the situation that he's been going through for the last two years, and to keep the kids from getting humiliated out there, he had to do this."

As for all the talk about Hilliard's unique strategy, Braddock said, " I don't think we got this much ink when we won the state championship in 1963."

jeff.elliottjacksonville.com, (904) 359-4292

This story can be found on Jacksonville.com at http://www.jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/012906/hig_20944810.shtml.

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News & Features

Tropics Teams Are All No. 1

Jan 31, 2006

By: Walter Villa

Three teams, three No. 1 rankings.

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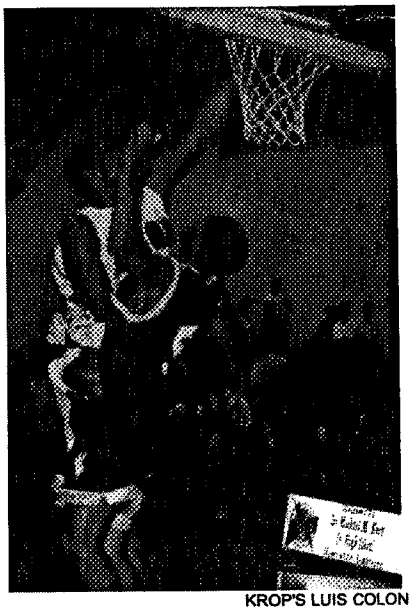
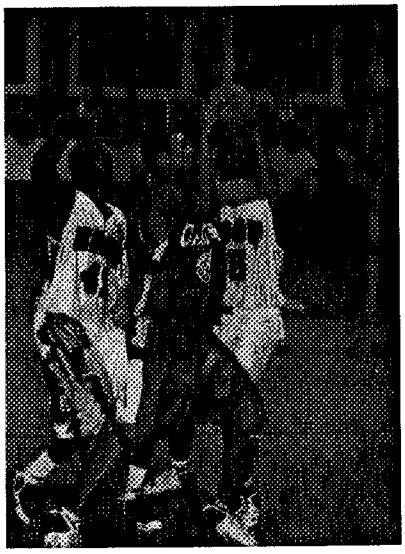


KROP'S LUIS COLON



Krop (6A), Jacksonville's Arlington Country Day (2A) and Calusa Prep (1A) are all ranked first in the state, according to the latest state poll, which was released Tuesday afternoon.

What do they all have in common? They all have at least three Miami Tropics players on their rosters, giving the Nike Travel Team a perfect record so far this season in terms of rankings.

Jacksonville ACD (19-3) was a unanimous selection again on Tuesday and has been at No. 1 all season. But Krop and Calusa were both ranked second last week and moved up in the latest poll.

Calusa (14-2) is involved in the closest race in the state. The Colts got just three first-place votes but still managed to edge second-ranked Lake Mary (24-0), which got four, and No. 3 Orlando Pine Castle (18-3), which earned five. Pine Castle had been No. 1 before losing a game last week.

In 6A, Krop (21-2) finally moved ahead of Orlando Edgewater (19-3). Krop, which has won 17 games in a row against some tough competition, earned 11 first-place votes to Edgewater's one.

On Monday, Krop routed Southridge, 74-35, in the first round of the GMAC, which is the Miami-Dade County championships. Krop played without Tropics star Orane Chin, a high-scoring junior forward who is out with a knee bruise.

"He probably won't play this week in the GMACs," Krop Coach Shakey Rodriguez said. "We hope to have him back next week for districts or for sure the following week for regionals."

Jared Ruebens, a 6-5 senior who replaces Chin in the starting lineup, led Krop with 20 points on Monday night. Ruebens, Krop's sixth man this season, averages 12 points and has started several games.

Next up for Krop is Wednesday's GMAC quarterfinal game against Hialeah. The game will be played at 6 p.m. at Killian High. With a win over Hialeah, Krop would advance to Thursday night's GMAC semifinal against either Killian or Miami High at 6:30 at Florida International University.

Killian (20-2) is ranked seventh in the state. Miami High (15-8) is the defending 6A state champion and has a talented player in University of Miami recruit Dwayne Collins.

Krop could play Norland, ranked sixth in the state, in Friday's GMAC final, also at FIU.

Either way, Krop will be looking to protect its No. 1 ranking.

"It's a great accomplishment for us considering how far Krop has climbed in such a short time," Rodriguez said of the ranking. "But this sport is about doing it on the court. The real No. 1 will stand tall at the end of the season."